NOTES AND COMMENTS

APRIL, 1937

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Desire, Function, Organism

ACCORDING to Lamarck's famous axiom, "Desire precedes function, and function precedes organism". In other words, a living organ is an expression, in terms of *substance*, of a physiological activity; and a physiological activity is an expression, in terms of *force*, of a *state of consciousness*. As Theosophy postulates, consciousness, force and substance are three inseparable aspects of the One Reality. A state of consciousness tends, by the law of its being, to seek expression, formulation, embodiment; this desire cannot be dissociated from the energy which enables it to express itself, or from the matter with which it clothes itself in concrete and explicit form.

Lamarck's axiom explains why the giraffe has a long neck, why the tiger has claws, why fish swim in the sea and birds fly in the air. It also suggests a reason why man does not go on all-fours, like his mammalian brethren. However, it is not fashionable to-day in biological circles to take Lamarck seriously. Contemporary professors of the science of life more often seem to assume that the opposite of his axiom is true, that organism precedes function, and function precedes desire.

It is evident that after an organ has been formed, its structure cannot be modified without affecting its function, and a disorder in function is reflected as a disorder in consciousness. The experience of illness and fever indicates how organism may be said to precede function, and function to precede desire. But if a diseased organ engenders confusion in the mind, what is the ultimate cause of disease? The student of Theosophy can conceive of only one conclusive answer, —that disease, like health, is a production of Karma. To translate this idea into Lamarckian terminology, a corruption of desire precedes a corruption of function, and a corruption of function precedes a corruption of organism. Doctors of medicine would be wise to test this hypothesis, that every physical ailment is caused *originally* by a spiritual ailment, by a lesion in consciousness; that a disease represents the effort of the soul to purge itself of poison, the body

serving for this purpose as a channel or drain-pipe. As for disease germs: it has been suggested that they are the product, not the cause, of morbid conditions. In any case they can flourish only in unhealthy and "predisposed" blood.

Molecular Decadence

Biologists have speculated on the possibility that some diseases at least may be caused by the misbehaviour of certain molecules of the cell-nucleus which normally reproduce and sustain life in the tissues. These molecules, the so-called genes, are of course hypothetical entities. Like protons and electrons, they are images in the scientific mind, nor is there the slightest possibility that the scientific eye will ever see them objectively. The gene was invented to explain the vagaries of heredity in fruit-flies. The utmost that can be said in favour of its real existence is that every activity of the living cell is ultimately controlled by invisible agents. If we so choose, we may call those agents genes, but that does not mean that they are actually physical molecules. Their alleged functions suggest to a student of Theosophy that their constitution might be more adequately described as *astral*.

However, whether the gene be a tiny particle of physical matter or a centre of vital force, biologists have discovered an apparent connection between the disintegration of a cell-nucleus, and the formation of the filterable viruses which are the apparent cause of infantile paralysis, influenza, yellow fever, and other painful and destructive diseases. The filterable virus is as invisible as the gene, and must not be confused with the bacteria which can be observed through the microscope. What it is in its proper nature, we do not know. The current theory is that, like the gene, it is a very complex molecule of living or semi-living matter.

We quote from *Harper's Magazine* (February, 1937), "Where Life Begins", by George W. Grey.

> Genes are the atoms of heredity. Nor is that all. Recent findings bring evidence of a still more fundamental rôle. Experiments show that the injury of genes may be a very serious catastrophe. The loss of certain genes means death. This suggests that the gene's function in the cell activities is not merely to control heredity but also to control life. We know genes only as they operate in the closely correlated team-work of the chromosomes. But suppose a gene should get separated from its fellows. Imagine one of these living molecules adrift in the cell fluid, a wanderer, could it function independently? If so, with what effect? Several years ago B. M. Duggar, of the University of Wisconsin, speculated on this possibility. Dr. Duggar suggested that a lone gene might be a destructive agent. He pointed to the filterable virus. Might not the virus be simply a gene on the loose?

The Dual Action of the Life-Force

Students of Theosophy are familiar with the doctrine that the life-force, *prana*, has a dual action on this plane; that it is the carrier of both bane and blessing, and the cause of death as well as of life. A few citations from *The Secret Doctrine* should make this clear. In addition, they indicate the key to this mystery, pointing to the fundamental fact that physical life is a manifestation of a conscious purpose which exists in Nature before any of its expressions

come into being. As we read in the *Rig Veda*, "Desire first arose in It, which was the primal germ of mind". The duality of the life-force is, therefore, attributable to the duality of consciousness in its manifested condition. As the "primal germ of mind" takes form under the impulsion of desire, it assumes two aspects, showing forth the opposite poles or potencies of Nature, spirit and matter, light and darkness, good and evil. Reflected upon the plane of physical experience, these two contrasted potencies become agencies of organic creation and destruction, the sources of life and death.

> [Theosophists and occultists] recognize a distinct vital principle independent of the organism — material, of course, *as physical force cannot be divorced from matter*, but of a substance existing in a state unknown to Science. *Life for them is something more than the mere interaction of molecules and atoms.* There is a vital principle without which no molecular combinations could ever have resulted in a living organism, least of all in the so-called "inorganic" matter of our plane of consciousness. . . . From *Gods* to *men*, from Worlds to atoms, from a star to a rushlight, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being—the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. The law of Analogy is the first key to the world-problem . . . (*The Secret Doctrine*, ed. 1888, I, 603-604).
>
> Science teaches us that the living as well as the dead organism of both man and animal are swarming with bacteria of a hundred various kinds, that from without we are threatened with the invasion of microbes with every breath we draw, and from within by leucomaines, ærobes, anærobes, and what not. But Science never yet went so far as to assert with the occult doctrine that our bodies, as well as those of animals, plants, and stones, are themselves altogether built up of such beings; which, except larger species, no microscope can detect. . . . The same infinitesimal, *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle—whether you call it organic or inorganic—*is a life*. Every atom and molecule in the Universe is both *life-giving* and *death-giving* to that form, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation universes and the ephemeral vehicles ready to receive the transmigrating soul, and as eternally destroys and changes the *forms* and expels those souls from their temporary abodes. It creates and kills; it is self-generating and self-destroying; it brings into being and annihilates, that mystery of mysteries—the *living body* of man, animal, or plant, every second in time and space; and it generates equally life and death, beauty and ugliness, good and bad, and even the agreeable and disagreeable, the beneficent and maleficent sensations. It is that mysterious LIFE, represented collectively by countless myriads of lives, that follows in its own sporadic way, the hitherto incomprehensible law of Atavism; that copies family resemblances as well as those it finds impressed in the aura of the generators of every future human being. . . . We are taught that every physiological change, in addition to pathological phenomena; diseases—nay life itself—or rather the objective phenomena of life produced by certain conditions and changes in the tissues of the body which allow and force life to act in that body; that all this is due to those unseen CREATORS and DESTROYERS that are called in such a loose and general way, microbes (I, 260-263).
>
> As the second principle of the universal Soul and *Vital* Force in Nature, it [i. e. nervous ether or animal vitality] is *intelligently* guided by the fifth principle thereof (I, 538, note).

This fifth principle is the "Manifesting Mind, whose essence, in its *dual* nature, is the Cause of all terrestrial phenomena" (I, 604).

One may draw this conclusion, that as we think, so we are; that the quality of our states of consciousness determines whether the life-force acts within us to build or to destroy, to create or to disintegrate.

The Virus of Vulgarity

A "gene on the loose" is a helpful conceit, for it suggests an entity that has isolated itself from the whole to which it properly belongs. Its destiny symbolizes the fate of the human entity in whom selfish desire has virtually suppressed all aspiration towards union with a superior order of being. It illustrates the degeneration of creative power into something toxic and noxious.

If we apply the law of analogy, it is apparent that the unregenerate human personality corresponds to a "gene on the loose". Whenever our field of consciousness is filled with private whims and fancies and concerns, whenever we look towards no horizon beyond the range of self-interest and self-love, we cease to sustain and to reproduce our real life. Thus our states of consciousness can become viruses poisoning whatever they encounter. The whole body of a civilization can be so infected by these human viruses that, for the sake of future humanity, Nature removes it from existence by slow or rapid death.

Among the many toxic "molecules" which are corrupting the body of our own civilization, not the least potent is the virus of vulgarity. Its deadly quality is too often not clearly perceived. Vulgarity is by its very nature a process of degradation, implying a progressive incapacity to recognize truth and beauty and nobility, denoting an ever-increasing attachment to the false and ugly and ignoble. In its extreme form, vulgarity is the affirmation that man exists merely to satisfy his bodily appetites and to feed his vanity and self-esteem. If anyone doubt this, let him reflect upon the more brutal expressions of the most developed modern art, the art of advertising. Even the most casual observation of the advertisements in the New York subway reveals the sordid futility of states of consciousness which can only reflect images of physical comfort and emotional excitement.

Machiavelli is the classic type of the cynic who has lost all faith in the betterment of the human being, and who seeks to raise himself above others by exploiting their vices and weaknesses. Such a person, if successful, might ultimately become a black magician, a veritable scourge of the race. Perhaps there is some cause for satisfaction that our contemporary Machiavellis are so vulgar themselves that they cannot separate themselves from the mass, no matter how hard they try.

One of the New York newspapers recently carried a full-page advertisement of a "success book", entitled *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, which has become a "best seller". A brief excerpt reveals its tone and purpose.

> Professor John Dewey, America's most profound philosopher, says the deepest urge in human nature is the "desire to be important". Remember that phrase, "the desire to be important". It is a gnawing and unfaltering human hunger. It was this desire that led the uneducated, poverty-stricken grocery clerk, Abraham Lincoln, to study law; that inspired Dickens to write his immortal novels. It makes you want to wear the latest styles, drive the latest car, and talk about your brilliant children. . . . If people are so hungry for a feeling of importance, imagine what miracles you and I can achieve by giving them honest appreciation. The rare individual who honestly satisfies this heart-hunger will hold people in the palm of his hand.

It is feeble and trite. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to state more clearly a thoroughly vulgar ideal, an ideal worthy of the "average man" beloved by politicians. It should help one to realize that all self-seeking is essentially base and crass; that the human personality separated from the soul, like the gene on the loose, is a "microbe". Incidentally, one notes, as an illustration of the tendency to seek the lowest possible motive for every act, the typical assumption of the modernistic philosopher that the greatest as well as the meanest of mankind are equally incapable of generosity, since all alike can only be inspired by the "desire to be important". Such a notion properly belongs to the same order of culture as the endorsements of soaps and cigarettes by members of the so-called upper classes.

The Two Natures of Man

As has been suggested, the dual action of the life-force is intimately connected with the dual nature of "Manifesting Mind". This is not, indeed, an abstract or academic question, for it can be studied and analyzed by every man who observes the behaviour of his own "manifesting mind", and the effects of his thoughts upon his bodily functions.

"Two souls, alas, dwell in my bosom", cries Goethe's Faust. No fact of experience can be more self-evident than the division of consciousness which characterizes human nature in its unredeemed condition. In a magnificent passage Pascal points to the splendour and misery which co-exist in man, and which continuously interact in the drama of his life.[1]

> We desire truth, and we find only uncertainty. We seek happiness, and we find only misery and death. We are incapable of not wishing for truth and happiness, and we are incapable of either certitude or happiness. This desire has been left us, in part to punish us, in part to make us realize from whence we have fallen. . . . What a chimæra then is man! What a novelty, what a monster, what a chaos, what a subject of contradiction, what a marvel! Judge of all things, witless worm; casket of truth, sewer of incertitude and error; glory and refuse of the universe. . . . Know, then, prideful man, what a paradox you are to yourself. Humble yourself, impotent reason; be silent, idiot nature; learn that man infinitely surpasses man, and learn from your Master your true condition, of which you are unaware. Listen to God!

Original Sin and the Fall of Man

What is the answer given by God to the riddle of the sphinx, the mystery of the human entity, half animal and half divine? Pascal, speaking as a devout Jansenist but also as a mystic, recalls the catastrophe of the original sin which was the cause of man's fall from his first perfection.

> If man had never been corrupt, he would, in his innocence, enjoy with assurance both truth and felicity; and if he had never been anything but corrupt, he would have no idea of truth nor of beatitude. But, hapless men that we are, more wretched than if there were no grandeur in our condition, we have an idea of happiness, and we cannot attain to it; we feel an image of truth, and we possess only the lie; we are incapable of being absolutely ignorant, and of knowing certainty, so manifest is it that we have been in a degree of perfection from which we have unfortunately fallen. . . . These foundations, solidly established on the inviolable authority of religion, teach us that there are two

[1] The translation of the following excerpts from the *Pensées* and the *Mystère de Jésus*, is by Mr. Morris Bishop, the author of *Pascal, the Life of Genius*.

equally constant truths of the faith: one, that man in the state of creation or of grace has risen above all nature, has been rendered as if like unto God, participating in His divinity; the other, that in the state of corruption and sin, he has fallen from that estate and has been rendered like unto beasts.

What is the distinguishing mark, the brand, of the fallen man? He is "only disguise, falsehood, and hypocrisy, both in himself and in regard to others. . . . His life is but a perpetual illusion." As a Buddhist would say, he is obsessed by the "heresy of separateness". The creature loses consciousness of his identity of essence with the Creator and conceives of himself as thinking, willing, acting by his own independent and inalienable power. Thus, in the last analysis, all, or almost all, of our defilement is traced to vanity.

Vanity is so anchored in the heart of man, that a soldier, a soldier's servant, a cook, a porter, vaunts himself and would fain have his admirers; and the philosophers themselves covet them; and those who write against vanity wish the fame of having written well; and their readers wish the fame of having read them. I who write have perhaps that desire; and perhaps those who will read this.

Redemption and Union

As self-centredness marks the fallen man, so self-giving marks the man who has been touched by grace and who has found the royal road to salvation. But as Pascal insists, a return to the lost paradise would be impossible, if the Divinity had not become incarnate as Christ, the Perfect Man, setting an example for the faithful, and, by the conquest of sin and mortality in his Person, making it possible for his disciples to conquer in their turn. In union with the Divine Master, the duality of human nature disappears, and man becomes a unified being, a veritable individual soul. Nor is that union as far away as we fancy. Pascal, meditating upon Gethsemane, heard the Master speak these words:

"Console thyself; thou wouldst not be seeking me, if thou hadst not already found me."

The Universal Theme of the Fall and the Redemption

No theologian has stated the fundamentals of the orthodox Christian dogma more clearly and more beautifully than Pascal. But these fundamentals are not peculiar to Christianity. All the world-religions develop variations upon this basic theme of the fall of man through sin, and his redemption through divine aid. In Buddhism, for example, the origin of suffering is linked with the birth and growth of the illusion of the "personal idea", the separate self, as the end of suffering depends upon the birth and life of the Buddha both as an Avatar, an incarnation of the Logos, and as the immortal being, the spark of the Eternal, which is the essence of every man. The Mysteries of Egypt and Greece, as even classical scholars are beginning to recognize, represented in dramatic form the descent of the soul into Hades, the land of the shadow of death, and the divine sacrifice which makes possible the re-ascent of the soul to the abode of the Immortals. This Mystery tradition has exercised a profound influence upon occidental thought through the medium of the Platonic philosophers; and it was repeated by Dante. The three phases of the epic of human

existence—the Inferno, the Purgatorio, the Paradiso—were not discovered by the great poet. They were known before the beginning of what we call history.

The universality of the doctrine indicates that it is in fact a basic tenet of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, the Logos Doctrine of the Great Lodge, the prototype and source of the teachings of all the Masters and Sages who have guided the evolution of the races of mankind. Therefore, it may be argued that the real truth and depth of the Christian version of the fall and the redemption, can only be understood in so far as this is interpreted in terms of Theosophy.

The Eternal War

The scope of the subject is so vast and its aspects so numerous and so varied, that only a fragment of it can be considered here. The inquiring student is invited to consult *The Secret Doctrine*, especially Volume II, which is almost entirely devoted to this theme.

It is significant that Theosophy primarily conceives of the fall and the redemption in terms of warfare. Also it presents human history as an integral part of cosmic history. The victories and defeats of man are episodes in a war which is co-extensive and co-eternal with the universe.

> The "Fall" is a universal allegory. It sets forth at one end of the ladder of Evolution the "rebellion", i. e. the action of differentiating intellection or consciousness on its various planes, seeking union with matter; and at the other, the lower end, the rebellion of matter against Spirit, or of action against spiritual inertia. . . . In the original allegory it is matter—hence the more material angels—which was regarded as the conqueror of Spirit, or the Archangels who "fell" on this plane. "They of the *flaming sword* (or animal passions) had put to flight the Spirits of Darkness." Yet it is the latter who fought for the supremacy of the conscious and divine spirituality on Earth and failed, succumbing to the power of matter (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 62).

It has been said that the first two chapters of *Genesis* give an accurate allegorical interpretation of the esoteric doctrine of creation. Even a cursory reading suggests that they preserve the record of the two great "rebellions". First there is the description of the triumphant penetration of the creative Spirit, the divine consciousness and purpose, into chaos and matter, the zone of unwisdom and unconsciousness. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Then follows the counter-attack of matter against the spiritual power, the insurgence of man "formed of the dust of the ground" against the laws of Divine Nature, the expulsion from Paradise.

There is the universal and "impersonal" descent of spirit into matter which has been described as a periodical necessity, a recurrent function of eternal Nature. The potentialities latent in matter are thus quickened to life, finally ripening into what would seem to be the quintessence of materiality, the "animal soul", *kama*, the complex of instincts and desires which constitutes man's legacy from the lower kingdoms of Nature. The fall of man may be said to occur, when the "human soul", *manas*, the ray of spiritual being which constitutes his real identity, entering into contact with the "animal soul", not only fails to transmute it into a true image of the spiritual, but, on the contrary, is itself captured, enslaved, and vampirized by the animal. Thus is created what Ploti-

nus calls the *suntheton*, the lower personality, the self-conscious combination of human and bestial powers, the monstrous phantasm of sinful man which awakened the horror of Pascal.

The Army of the Spirit

It has been noted that Theosophy describes the whole of existence as an incessant combat between spirit and matter, light and darkness, consciousness and unconsciousness, force and inertia, good and evil. This combat does not end with the rebellion of matter against spirit, with the fall of man, with the "failure" of the "Archangels who fought for the supremacy of the conscious and divine spirituality on Earth". However, as the warfare continues, it changes its form, becoming increasingly individual, interior and conscious. Doubtless, all the kingdoms of Nature are constantly in a state of war, but man's battles must be fought on planes of consciousness where the mineral, the plant and the animal can scarcely be said to exist. As it is the lower personality, the *suntheton*, which leads the attack against the human soul, so it is the human soul, the "Higher Ego", which must lead the counter-attack against the lower personality.

Here again Theosophy confirms the testimony of the world-religions, but broadens its significance. It is possible for us to win the fight, because it has already been won by the great hierarchy of our predecessors. During every cycle there have been "Gods" who have vanquished legions of "Titans". "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." At the one pole, there is the struggle between the Gods and the Titans; at the other pole, there is the struggle between conscience and selfish desire in the heart of a child. But the child who obeys conscience is a comrade of the God; and the victory of the God makes lighter the ordeal of the child.

According to Theosophy, the redemption of mortal man would be almost inconceivable if the elect of mankind, the Masters of the Great Lodge, those who by valiant effort have liberated their own souls, were not present in the world to help stricken humanity. The supreme religious leaders, the Christ and the Buddha and others who have incarnated and lived among men, have given living proof that the spirit in man can subdue and transform his animal nature. Thus one may think of the Masters as officers in the Army of the Spirit. No man can enlist under their command without becoming in some degree the recipient of their victorious power.

The Correspondence Between Racial and Individual Experience

Everything in the Universe follows analogy. "As above, so below"; Man is the microcosm of the Universe. That which takes place on the spiritual plane repeats itself on the Cosmic plane. Concretion follows the lines of abstraction; corresponding to the highest must be the lowest; the material to the spiritual (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 177).

It is the theosophical tradition that the fall of man was a racial catastrophe,

an historical calamity, which gravely altered the course of human evolution. The exact dates are not given, but one is led to assume that this most terrible of tragedies occurred millions of years ago. Since that time, in cycle after cycle, at appointed intervals, there have been incarnations of Avatars or Saviours, of emissaries from the Great Lodge who have laboured to arrest the spiritual decline of the various races.

But for the mystic, the fall and the redemption are individual as well as racial experiences. Their stages and episodes are continuously enacted and re-enacted within himself. There, within his field of consciousness, spirit and matter incessantly attack and counter-attack. There he is daily tempted to re-commit the original sin. The divine sacrifice which can release his soul from bondage, is not a remote event but an ever-present challenge and inspiration. How could it be otherwise, if man be, indeed, the mirror of the Universe? We can never begin to understand the mystery of man, unless we recognize that racial and individual experience correspond to each other; that objective history and subjective biography repeat the same processes and illustrate the same principles.

Modern Improvements and Real Progress

The doctrine of the dual nature of man, and of the struggle between spirit and matter, is almost absent from the consciousness of modern man. The Churches which preserved it in the West for nearly two thousand years, have ceased to emphasize it, so great is their fear of unpopularity. Science in general denies its truth. Through a tragic misunderstanding, the theory of organic evolution has been interpreted to mean that man has only an animal ancestry; that all his qualities are animal derivatives, more or less sublimated.

Students of Theosophy have been accused of blind indifference to the salutary possibilities of scientific progress. They have been very unjustly accused of contempt for the power of the reason to improve the lot of man. It is not understood that they do not lack respect for the reason. But they believe the reason to be effective only when its operations are based upon sound intuition and tested experience. The duality of unredeemed human nature has been attested by the experience of uncounted centuries. No inventions of science, no economic theory, no sociological dream, no legislation, can possibly cure the suffering of humanity, as long as this duality lasts. Its persistence implies the active existence of vicious and futile desires, of psychic viruses. Truly, "Desire precedes function, and function precedes organism." If mankind in its present condition were transferred *en masse* to some paradise, that paradise would very soon become a hell; for the desires of man as at present constituted could only produce an organism adapted to life in some hell.

The student of Theosophy should be free from the modern delusions concerning progress. He should know from his own experience that real progress depends solely upon the ability of individuals to discover the path to redemption and union. True happiness is independent of modern improvements, of physical and political and economic changes. It is the heritage of him who fights "for the supremacy of the conscious and divine spirituality on Earth".

FRAGMENTS

THE new outpouring of life has come with the spring. From their hidden depths, the forces of manifestation are brought forth to express themselves in the beauty of leaf and flower and song. What must not be the wonder of those depths, that their outermost appearance has such loveliness! Yet, if not rightly understood and used, this outflow will mean loss and dissipation, since the desire for sensation has, in unregenerate nature, centrifugal force and not centripetal.

So Nature's spring, which was intended as a picture of the inner life, and thus to lure us more surely to its seeking, has been turned by the disobedient will of man to his own destruction,—intent upon the reflection, he has lost, alas! all knowledge of the Reality from which it came. God forgive us that we take his choicest gifts to build a wall between ourselves and him.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense", says the Spouse in the Canticle, the disciple to his Master. Until the shadows of ignorance and blindness have been dispersed by the radiance of the Sun of our souls, we shall dwell, in the heights of our being, upon the remembrance of what our Lord has done for us, who threw a bridge across the chasm of sin (himself that bridge), which makes possible, even now, our passage to Eternal Life; for myrrh signifies remembrance: and with the frankincense of prayer we shall commune with him, seeking the vision of his face, and the illumination of his will, that our poor, barren heights may become a Mount of Transfiguration, where, though smitten to the ground as the Apostles of old, we may yet behold the glory that is to be when the times of struggle and tribulation shall have passed.

O that this spring-time might be an inner spring-time to our souls, that we might fling wide open the prison doors behind which our true selves languish, leading them forth into the fair garden which our hearts shall then have become, —"a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters", radiant with the sunshine of the Master's presence, an Eden where the Lord God himself may walk in the cool of the evening.

Let us dwell upon the picture of what this could mean for us, how transformed life would be, how the cares and trivialities would fall into their proper places as the clay of our garden soil, or the fertilizers for our flowers,—all, all to be used for ends of usefulness and beauty, and so the import of them growing, with the plants they nourish, clearer, day by day.

What would it not mean to the Master to find our bleak hill-sides turned into luxuriant bloom, places of refreshment where he could rest from his unremitting toil? We reflect too seldom, I fear, that his spring-time waits on our choked minds and stony, unproductive hearts. He gives the opportunity, the tools, all needed equipment; he has provided the fullest reward of our labour; but we shall find these on the Mountain of Myrrh and on the Hill of Frankincense; and while we prefer to dwell in the Valley of Desolation we cannot lament our empty hands and our unprofitable lives.

Easter for us was made possible, by the Easter won for us when, long past, in Palestine, that day broke, and the shadows fled away; and Easter for him will be—O heart, what miracle to give him Easter!—when we, having likewise passed the darkness of Calvary, by his grace, meet him in the dawn-lit Garden which we have dug and planted.

What shall we care then for the tender flush in the sky, the whispering wind, the fragrant dew, or yet the angelic presences:—Rabboni! Master!

CAVÉ.

THEOSOPHY AND DEMOCRACY[1]

IT IS our custom, at the opening meeting of each season, to speak of the Society itself, and of the principles upon which it was founded and which have guided its conduct through the more than sixty years of its existence. Our theme is to be the same to-night, but a question which has been sent us makes it possible to set it forth against a contrasting background. The question is: *Why is The Theosophical Society opposed to the ideas of Democracy?*

The Society's Freedom

This question renders its first service when we perceive that, as it stands, it is not susceptible of an answer. The Theosophical Society, as such, can neither oppose nor approve the ideas of Democracy; nor is there any member who has the authority to speak for it in such matters. If we regard Democracy as a form of government or social theory, we are estopped by the By-law that no member may involve the Society in political disputes, nor promulgate any doctrine as that advanced by the Society; while if—as sometimes appears—Democracy be regarded as a kind of new religion, which modern enlightenment has substituted for the superstitions of the past, then we are equally estopped by the provision that every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy. The Society has "no creed, dogma, nor personal authority" to impose, and its members "are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own". The question, as phrased, is based upon a false assumption, which contravenes both the fundamental and essential freedom of the Society and the open platform which it has steadily maintained and which our constitution demands. We must go behind the phrasing, therefore, before we can deal with it.

The Theosophic Attitude: The Reality Behind Words

This is the second service the question renders. It presents, in a trivial but specific instance, a need which inheres in all human intercourse, and which our study of Theosophy has so emphasized that in all our discussions we try consciously to meet it. It is the need to look through words and phrases and symbols to their intent in their user's mind, and to the reality to which they point. The failure to do this, the naïve and lazy habit of dealing with words as though they were no more than the letters which spell them, fixed and final for all men in the meaning they have (at the moment) for oneself, accounts for the confusion, cross-purposes and superficiality of much ordinary conversation and philosophic debate. Each man must, of necessity, look at life and reality from his own angle of approach, and must interpret what he sees in terms of his own experience. His words are but the symbols of elements

[1] From the headings of an opening address before the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society.

in that experience. They can be, for him, nothing else. They are sign-boards that point back, through his memories, to things met in his past, in likeness or contrast to which he seeks to explain his present concern. Only as we take our stand sympathetically beside him, can we see as he sees; and only as we bring to memory experiences that are akin to his, can his words mean to us what they mean to him, and our talk be in the same tongue. The readiness to put oneself in one's fellow's place, the search for sympathetic points of agreement as the basis on which all conversation must rest, the confidence that, in every view honestly held, beneath all error, there must be some element of truth, and that that truth is of moment to us—this is the typical theosophical attitude that we endeavour always to maintain, and which we wish these meetings invariably to manifest.

Let us strive to look, therefore, beyond the phrasing of this question to the questioner's intent. Perhaps it was something like this: *Why does the study of Theosophy seem so often to lead to the rejection of the ideas of Democracy?*

To make as good a case for the question as we can, would it not seem that a body, whose first stated object is the formation of a nucleus of universal brotherhood, without distinction of race or creed or caste, upon whose free and open platform all members meet on a basis of equality, where all views must be considered on their own merits, without regard to their source and without the support of any other authority than that which inheres in truth,—would it not seem that our Society should be of all organizations the most democratic?

Perhaps, indeed, it is so; let us not too hastily prejudge the matter before we have examined it. Perhaps the "ideas of Democracy", which our presentation of Theosophy is held to oppose, may be false ideas. We wish that the questioner were here to make more clear just what ideas he means, for of late years many have been given that name which would not have been so called a generation ago. But our theme, after all, is not Democracy, but Theosophy against a background of Democracy, and we must be content if we can outline the central figure in broad strokes, even if we leave the background vague and shadowy.

Democracy Looks Horizontally: Theosophy Looks Up

The word "Democracy" is a compound of the two Greek words, *demos*, meaning the crowd or people in the mass, and *kratos*, power, or its exercise as dominion or rule, so that the literal and primary meaning, as we all know, is the condition of affairs when the ruling power is given over to the crowd or to the mass of the people collectively. Generally speaking, its outlook is *horizontal*, confined to a single level, where, it is the convention to assume, one finds oneself and all mankind. This has become the secondary meaning of the word, the obliteration or ignoring of all differences between men, the consideration of oneself and all others as mere units in the mass. It negatives all idea of an upward look, or the recognition of any authority inhering in a higher order of being than one's own.

"Brotherhood", on the other hand, often regarded as the basis of Democracy, necessitates for its comprehension just this *upward* look which Democracy refuses. It is the bond between children of the same parents, and it is meaningless save as we look to those parents. It exists between those who recognize the *same superior authority*. No man is a brother who is not first a son.

The two words Democracy and Brotherhood, therefore, actually imply totally different directions of outlook, different standpoints and centres of reference, and different motives and bonds of union. The word "Theosophy", even more than the word Brotherhood, emphasizes this difference. It, too, is composed of two Greek words, *Theou* and *sophia*, divine wisdom, or the wisdom of God. In the first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul uses the word as an attribute of Christ: "Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I, 24). The very name of our Society is thus an assertion of Divinity. It points to a power and a wisdom which are more and greater than man's, yet from which man can draw, and where authority and dominion inhere. It is precisely because students of Theosophy have learned to look *up* to this transcendent, overshadowing Wisdom and Power, and to open themselves to its guidance and rule, seeking brotherhood through the realization of a common fatherhood, that they cannot accept as satisfactory, or as having any real and solid substance, the flat, two-dimensional concept of being, which sees only a single level of life and would confine all power and authority to it.

Here we have the answer to our question. Our Society is, of necessity, primarily and persistently concerned with that vertical, spiritual dimension of being to which its name and principal objects alike point, but to which Democracy (in its ordinary connotations) must, for self-preservation, as persistently shut its eyes. Its "flat-land" philosophy can neither assimilate nor endure the recognition of higher levels, and the Society's unremitting effort to demonstrate these, could scarcely escape being thought hostile. Yet there is no surer way to the heart of the Theosophical Movement, in thought and feeling and work, than to lay firm hold upon this fundamental principle,—that it involves always a vertical dimension and action—a height and depth and solidity, an origin and end, purposes, loyalties and obediences, potentialities and capacities, which Democracy, looking only to a thin surface, wholly ignores or denies.

An Added Dimension

The added dimension which Theosophy thus imparts to our view of life and of all things, is the key to its understanding and to the difference between it and the materialistic, and literally superficial, thought of our age. The difference is like looking up from a map, drawn on the flat surface of a sheet of paper, to see the scene itself before one, in all its three-dimensional reality, with its hills and valleys, its sunlight and the drifting shadows of clouds, its perspectives and far horizons,—and everywhere the miracle of life. Theosophy includes within itself all sciences and philosophies, but, while accepting all their positive contributions to man's knowledge, it sees them as no more than flat sections in the solid substance of reality. It embraces, also, all religions; but not for the

purpose of opposing them one to the other, or of trying to find their origins in "nature worship", or in the "taboos and superstitions" of savagery. Rather does it show us how, looking through the different imagery and symbolism of different times and races, we may see, in all, the same eternal truths of the life of the soul and its relation to the overshadowing Spirit. It gives unity to diversity, and in simplicity reveals depth within depth of meaning. Always it gives more; it never makes less. It vitalizes, validates, makes real.

Democracy Made Valid: the Theosophic Method

These may seem sweeping statements, but they are easily tested. Let us, as an example, see what Democracy becomes when we add to it the vertical dimension it has rejected, but upon which Theosophy always insists. Let us look up and see, brooding over mankind, Divine Wisdom—*Theousophia*—the Truth, than which "no religion is higher". We may choose what image we will for it: the Over Soul of Emerson, the One Mind into which all individual minds are inlets; or think of it as the Logos of St. John; or as the Platonic Trinity of the True, the Good, the Beautiful; or as that "True Sun", of the Indian Gayatri, "from Whom all proceed, to Whom all must return"; or as the Sun-disk, pictured in the glyphs of Tel-el Amarna, from which rays come down to man, ending in hands that give and receive gifts. Let us assume that all men in our Democracy look up to such a Father in the Heavens—as the seers and sages of every race and age have looked—seeing there the author of their being, and believing that those rays, which reach down to them, are rays of Truth and Wisdom, bearing the authority of Truth. If then, any question were to arise, affecting the whole group, and each man, putting all prejudice and self-interest aside, were to strive honestly to make his mind an inlet of the Divine Mind, his view would be that facet of the Truth whence his own ray of light came to him. It would, of course, be no more than a fragmentary view, but it would none the less be true; and because the Truth is one, when all these fragmentary views were put together, none rejected but each in its own proper place, they would make one whole,—the Father's Truth and Will. Then, indeed, the "voice of the people" could be the "Voice of God"; Democracy, recognizing and subordinating itself to divine authority, would become, in fact, a Brotherhood; and the method of Democracy would be the *Theosophic Method*,—the method through which, in the studies and discussions of our Society, Truth is sought.

We need not point out how different is the actual democratic procedure, and result. Not Pilate, but the multitude, condemned the Christian Master. On his behalf, Pilate appealed to the people, and the "voice of the people" "cried out the more exceedingly", crucify him; release unto us Barabbas.

All teaching of religion has for long been prohibited in our public schools. There is no thought of Divine Authority, as such, but only of human opinion. Neither the Divine Will nor the wholeness of Truth is sought, but the clash of opposing prejudices and the partisan dominance of a faction over the whole. A people is like a nursery of children who can be united either from above or from

below; either in love and obedience to their parents, or in unanimous surrender to the promptings of mischief; but who otherwise, left only to forces emanating from their own plane, will bicker and quarrel, until the strongest bully among them imposes his tyranny and silences their complaints. The unity, in which diversity is reconciled, is never on the same plane as the diversity. The only true basis of union is in a common loyalty to something beyond self: love of a parent, or love of a Cause, put above self and in which self is lost. Men come to realize it in common labour and suffering and self-giving, in war and in sacrifice; never in self-seeking.

The Authority of Truth the Bulwark of Freedom

Professor Etienne Gilson of the University of Paris, speaking at the Harvard tercentenary, emphasized the crying need of our time for the universalism and absolutism that marked the Middle Ages, upholding "a spiritual order of realities whose absolute right it is to judge even the State, and eventually to free us from its oppression". He quoted the French philosopher Jules Lachelier, as having remarked that "the only conceivable form of Democracy was Theocracy", and, he added, "that very kind of Theocracy which William Penn had once established in the forests of Pennsylvania". "Despite its paradoxical appearance", Professor Gilson continued, "that statement was fundamentally sound in this at least, that as soon as men refuse to be ruled directly by God, they condemn themselves to be ruled directly by man; and if they decline to receive from God the leading principles of their moral and social conduct, they are bound to accept them from the king, or from the State, or from their race, or from their own social class. . . . Against the encroachments of the totalitarian State, our only conceivable protection, humanly speaking at least, is in a powerful revival of the Mediæval feeling for the universal character of Truth".

It is this universal and absolute character of Truth that Theosophy stresses. In it, and in it alone, it recognizes an absolute and ultimate authority to which it renders whole-souled, devoted loyalty and obedience, finding, in the measure of man's obedience to the behests of Truth, the measure of his freedom—of mind and spirit, and even of the body. Our Society has "no authority to enforce or impose" precisely because all authority is in Truth itself—in the Divine Wisdom which it would have all its members seek and serve.

Relativity and Reality

The Theosophical Method not only reconciles Theocracy and Democracy (Theocracy, let it be understood, not priestcraft), it reconciles also relativity and absolutism. It grants immediately that each man's view can be but partial, his outlook being relative to where he stands, so that what one man, at one time, may see in one way, another man or another time may see quite differently. This is the basic postulate of the theory of relativity, which, like all half-truths, if left to stand alone, becomes the most misleading of falsehoods. Untold harm has been done by the false inferences drawn from it in the realms

of religion and ethics, as when it is argued that as different ages and peoples have seen Goodness and Truth and Beauty in different guise, so that the moral standards at one time and place have not been those of another, therefore goodness and morality themselves are relative to man's opinion, man-made, without other reality or authority than that which man himself gives to them. The exact opposite is the fact, and a fact which the Theosophic Method makes clear. A man-made thing is like a picture thrown upon a screen. All those who can see it at all, see the same thing, because it exists only on the surface where it has been projected, without solid substance of its own. Whatever, on the other hand, is existent in its own right, as part of the solid substance of reality, will, by that very fact, of necessity show different sides or aspects of itself when approached from different angles. Relativity of aspect, therefore, is not a denial but an affirmation of absolutism of being, and this Theosophy never lets its students forget. The Theosophic Method of welcoming all views and rejecting none, makes this relation between the relative and the real startlingly apparent. For though the wholeness of Truth can never be confined in a single formula, nor be reflected in more than one aspect from a single mind, yet when views from different angles are put together, as here in our meetings, a synthesis is formed which is far richer than any one of them alone. The method is like that of the stereoscope, whose lenses, permitting us to view together the flat photographs taken from slightly different angles, give us the same impression of depth and perspective that one has in looking at the original itself.

Not the least of the advantages of this revelation of reality's many-sidedness, is that it forces us to recognize that however much we see, more is hid from us. We never know what the shrubbery may conceal, nor what may lie beyond the hill.

The Ethical Spirit

What we have said may serve also to make clear the nature of the *Ethical Spirit* which emanates from and breathes through Theosophy. It is absolute, impersonal, descending from above, as far beyond the reach of man to modify to his wishes, as are the configurations of the stars. Like them, the ethical law is something which man sees clearly only when he looks up, turning his eyes away from the world and shutting out its glamour; not something to be discovered in a sideways look to his interests or to his fellows. It has no kinship with expediency. It brooks no compromise. It is indifferent to your assent or dissent. Unmoved, unalterable, calm and serene, it reveals itself as itself, the Law of the Soul's life. We disobey it at our peril; but it neither threatens us nor promises us reward. It does not look to us at all, but looks up, and is what it is in the same obedience to what is above it, that we, if we would live, must render to it. It is not only *Theousophia*, Divine Wisdom, it is *Theoudunamis*, Divine Power. It is "the Word", which we must "make flesh". It is Truth.

But also it is Beauty; and though when we look to it through the storm-

clouds of our own crossed wills and denied desires, it seems to us stern and cruel in its aloof imperatives, when we look, with single eye and heart, to it itself, we see it as Beauty,—beauty that needs no other compulsion than its own loveliness to make us follow it. Here, as always, the real can only be described in paradox. Of the two opposites, both are true, both must be taken.

Uprightness in full Literalness

We cannot separate the ethical spirit of Theosophy from the religious life to which it leads, and neither can be understood save as the consequence and outgrowth of the vertical look and vertical movement which characterize Theosophy. Through this motion, spirit and matter are knitted together, so that matter embodies spirit, and spirit, incarnating in matter, animates, quickens and transforms it. As our eyes open to this, the whole world becomes transformed. A new heaven and a new earth are made. In everything, in the humblest and simplest and most familiar, we see the life of the spirit, and spiritual significance and values. "Uprightness" takes on a richer, literal meaning as the alignment of the whole character to the vertical movement of life; and to "uprise" has restored to it its connotations of rising from sleep and resurrection from the dead.

Little by little, mind, heart and will all follow this vertical movement. The student, always looking up to what is above him, his heart drawn by its beauty, his mind held by its truth, his will obedient to its good, striving to serve and embody it, grows little by little into its likeness; as "the mind is dyed the colour of its thoughts", the heart "united to what it loves", the will "assimilated into that upon which it feeds".

It is here that those who have to stand up and speak the truth that is in them, suffer the shame of knowing that all their faults cry out against that truth to make it seem a lie. They perceive themselves, and know that all must perceive them, "far off in the region of unlikeness". And yet their truth is the truth. Theosophy, loved and lived, has transformed and does transform them, daily working its miracle of quickening the dead and waking the consciousness from its drugged dreams of self. We are different, and know that we are different, because of Theosophy. Force and form and consciousness are three aspects of one thing. To change one is to change all; and when we learn to look up and to open ourselves, even in the least degree, to the Divine Wisdom and the Divine Power, even our outer form and the expression of our face, change. Looking up, reaching up, *loving* up, we grow up.

The Theosophic Life

It is this "uprightness", in the full, literal derivation of the word, this change from the horizontal to the vertical in the direction of our interest, attention, motives and the whole range of our activities, that marks the essential difference between the theosophic life and the life of the man of the world. That difference has far-reaching consequences,—too far-reaching to permit us to do more than point to them. But before we attempt even that, it will be well

to note that though the theosophic attitude and method may properly be regarded as pertaining to and characteristic of The Theosophical Society as such, the ethical spirit and religious life of Theosophy can be no part of the Society's outer procedure or organism, but must breathe through and animate it only as they are incarnate in the lives of the individual members. Thus, in speaking of them, we are passing beyond the Society itself to the wider realm and new world which Theosophy opens to its disciples, but which all members of the Society are as free to reject as to accept.

If it be entered, then, as we have said, there is experienced a literal conversion, the whole life being turned about through a right angle into a direction and dimension of which you have been scarcely conscious before. All being is one, yet so marked is this change, that you seem to be denizens of two distinct worlds, and your life and work and consciousness to be a linkage between the two,—between the world of matter and of spirit, between the realized and the potential, between the manifest actualities all about you, and the unmanifest ideal, which nevertheless is only unmanifest here with us, while shining in the heavens in its own light, and that light already penetrating to our dim eyes. As we intend upon it, perception leads to reception and passes into inspiration, and inspiration into action,—that we be not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. From action comes clearer vision, and renewed and stronger inspiration, better directed and more efficient acts.

Thus the wheel is set in motion of cyclic interchange from plane to plane. Everything visible begins to tell us of the greater invisible that lies behind it and which it, in part, foreshows. Every material thing is seen as the crystallization of a spiritual thing, a vehicle of a spiritual gift. All becomes *alive*. In the daily round of duty we perceive that the highest potencies may be served, and our days become transformed,—as a task performed with one we love is lit by love. In beautifying a room, Beauty itself may be served, and, with the Beautiful, the True and the Good. To seek perfection in the smallest detail is —or may be—to worship the Perfect and to strive to make it incarnate and manifest on earth as it is in heaven.

We say it *may* be this, for there is a counterfeit of it which vanity and self-worship can put forth. At every point we must remember, as Mr. Judge used to say, that "many a Blackie wears a blue coat". *Light on the Path* tells us, "it must be the Eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire for growth",—nor any thought of self. We must have perceived that there is a better service open to us than that of self; and in that service of what is far above self, self becomes insignificant. In its end, in the chêlaship to which the theosophic life ultimately leads, self is lost, and all of life assumes that representative and ambassadorial capacity, inseparable from whole-souled devotion, such as that to which St. Paul pointed when he wrote, "I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me".

From its very outset, however, the theosophical life combines both the contemplative and the active sides of the religious life. They are shown to us as two halves of one whole, as necessary to each other as the systole and diastole

of the heart, or the alternate inbreathing and outbreathing of the breath. But the contemplative life comes first and must be the foundation of the active life,—as thought must be the foundation of speech, right perception the basis of right action, and as the servant must listen to his Lord's commands before he can obey them. It includes the love and service of one's fellow man, but that love and service are rooted in a love and service of something far above one's fellow man. To paraphrase the Upanishads, not for love of man is man dear, but for love of the Supreme is man dear. Or, in Christian terms, it is the service of his children for love of the Master. It was not without purpose that in Christ's teaching the love of God was put first, and love of one's neighbour came second and as a derivative of the first. Love of God inevitably flows down and expresses itself in love of one's neighbour; but love of one's neighbour does not of necessity rise to love of God, for our neighbour, like ourselves, has two sides to his being. Therefore, when the order of these two commandments is reversed, it is common for the love of God to be lost, and humanitarianism degenerates into a mere worship of material comfort, which, atrophying the spiritual nature, acts to the degradation and not to the ennobling of mankind. This is to be seen on every side to-day. Like Democracy, its false sentimentalism is but a consequence of the materialism which sees nothing in life or in man but the one flat level of his animal existence.

Theosophic Doctrines

From what was said of the absolute freedom of the Society, it should be wholly clear that those doctrines which characterize Theosophy as a philosophic system are no more forced upon our members than the doctrines of Christianity or Buddhism or of any other of the great religions. The theosophic doctrines are, moreover, in no way original with the Society. Each and all of them may be found elsewhere, though not always in a form so easily recognizable. It is through the Society, however, that a knowledge of them has been spread in the western world, for in the early days of our Movement they could find scant hearing in Europe or America. Yet to one who himself believes in them, it seems inevitable that the majority of our members, having had the opportunity to study them, should have come to believe in them too; and, above all, that anyone who has entered into the theosophic life, must almost of necessity have come to think in such, or similar, terms. But whether that be so or not, it is easy to see how natural and logical the vertical orientation of life makes these theosophical doctrines appear; and there is the old saying that he who lives the life shall know the doctrine.

The Doctrine of Correspondences: As Above So Below

Were it not that the universe is somehow all of one piece, understanding of it would be impossible. The doctrine of correspondences, or analogy, which the student of Theosophy learns to use as a guide in his thinking, is, in fact, a necessity in any theory of knowledge that would permit the human consciousness to reflect the greater life of which it is a part. It is implicit in all science, and exemplified in such modern hypotheses as represent the atom as a solar

system in miniature. It is set forth succinctly in the phrase that man is the microcosm of the Macrocosm, but with equal clearness in the statement in the Book of Genesis that God created man in his own image. This is not a dark saying for anyone who has learned to look up to the Divine Wisdom, and who strives to open himself to the transforming action of the Divine Power. He has learned to see all life as an incarnation of Spirit, and he perceives that in himself and in all about him, life attains its purpose just so far as that incarnation is complete, and the outer vehicle made a perfect expression and manifestation of its own spiritual ray and divine model,—just so far, in other words, as it verifies and fulfils the law, "as above so below". This law places in our hands a key to the understanding of mysteries otherwise wholly beyond our ken, a key which we can use. Do we puzzle over the relation of spirit to matter, or of the inner world of consciousness to the outer world of objects and of acts? What is that relation in ourselves? How does thought pass into speech and act? How, from the world of the potential, is the actual brought forth?

As the spark, stroked from a cat's fur, is the same in essence as the lightning flash that illumines the heavens, so, in the little, we may read the secret of the great.

Reincarnation and Karma

Or let us consider the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma. They do but extend over death, the same laws of cause and effect, and of cyclic alternation between opposing phases, that we observe everywhere in life. Everywhere there is such alternation as that of death and life. Why then should we think of death alone as final, not to be followed again by life? There is a time of sowing and a time of reaping, but from the reaping comes the seed for a new sowing. Winter and summer; day and night; waking and sleeping; inbreathing and outbreathing; the unuttered thought finding expression in speech and act, and returning again to silent contemplation. Everywhere there is this interchange between the inner and the outer, this cyclic passage from the world beyond our senses to the visible world of material form and manifestation. Everywhere, once we have learned to look up, we perceive incarnation and reincarnation—of our thought, our purpose, our ideal, ourselves. And this is true because neither thought, nor purpose, nor ideal, nor self, nor anything that is, is ever wholly incarnate. Always there is more than that which, in any moment, is revealed. Each new day finds us a new man, different from the old in the further assimilation of experience, yet one with the old. We sink to sleep at night, the senses folded, nor is there any going forth of consciousness to manifest itself in act; and in the morning wake, to take up again the unfinished task, to enter again the environment and relationships we have ourselves created through the past. We should never think to limit the law of cause and effect to a single day. Nor should we speak of the "accident" of waking in the same room in which we went to sleep. It is quite clear to us that the morning greetings we receive from those about us are not uncoloured by the intercourse we had with them the day before. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

Few of those who quarrel with the doctrine of reincarnation—still fewer of the many more who ignore it—have ever squarely faced the difficulties and contradictions that are immediately involved in its denial. Yet it is those very contradictions which account for much of the delusion, rebellion and bitterness of our times. Taught by Democracy to reject the vertical dimension of life, and to look only to a material standard of values—their views, and their thought of themselves, confined to the short span of a single life—men see only injustice in the inequalities of birth and fortune, and therefore strive to tear down, in hate and envy, all above them. In so doing they are but trying to realize in fact the dead level of equality that has been taught them as democratic theory and their inherent right. No more false and subversive doctrine could be preached, yet we hear it promulgated to-day from positions of highest trust.

It is fortunate that such a levelling can never be made, for it would be subversive of far more than civilization and personal freedom. Accomplished, it would mean death, for life, as we have seen, is always a cyclic passage from one level to another. In the name of human justice—wholly misunderstood, travestied, made blind where its sight should be keenest—it would, could it be produced, strangle in its inception every movement of Divine Justice, and of Divine Mercy as well.

The twin doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation make wholly impossible any thought of uniformity as desirable. The infinite diversity of life—of consciousness, of form, of powers and capacities, of opportunities and limitations, of strength and weakness and knowledge and ignorance—all these things speak to us of the untrammelled freedom of life to fit the outer environment to each need, however momentary, of the evolving soul. The student of Karma sees the whole outer world of manifestation—of circumstances and relationships, of success and failure and happenings of all kinds—as a magic mirror, which reflects back to the soul that which emanates from it and which it itself is. And the magic of this great mirror is this: that these reflected rays, coming back to the soul, are for ever acting to further the soul's progress in its evolutionary path, or to press it back to the right way, when it wanders from it. Thus they both reveal deficiencies and make them good, give warning of a disturbed balance and restore it. We make mistakes, and from them come pain that we must bear and consequences that we must accept and face. But as these are studied, it is seen that in the right use of the consequences is the corrective needed by the nature that made the mistake. At every moment, in every relationship, perfect justice and perfect mercy are attained to the measure that the outer environment and happenings are plastic and mobile, free to rise and fall from any level, unconfined to any uniformity, but always exactly fitting the inner needs of the evolving soul.

Would it be a merit in a hat and dress shop, if it kept but one size and style of hat and dress, which all men and women and children were forced to wear, without regard to the size and shape of their heads, their height or weight or

age? No more would it be a merit in the world, which provides the vesture of souls, were all human lots to be the same.

The effect of the doctrine of Reincarnation is no less than that of Karma in altering our attitude to our personal fate, and not only in reconciling us to it, but in leading us to enter into it fully and completely. As we look about us, we see on every side, men trying to escape from their lives, seeking distraction, to "kill time", to find substitute activities for what are properly their own. That is not to what Theosophy leads. Enabling us to see a life-time as but a day, preceded and to be followed by others, till the whole gamut of "weather" and the seasons is complete, it causes us to try to learn to the full, from each, the lesson its special features provide. No man would wish all his days to be soft with ease, his powers never called forth to their utmost limit, his endurance and his manhood never proved. There is that in the spirit which seeks and welcomes difficulty, danger, struggle and hardship. There is a time for labour and a time for rest, for pleasure, and for pain. These times are not in our own hands, and we live wisely and well not by shunning either, nor by trying to take either out of its appointed season, nor by seeking to blend the two into one drab neutral tone, but by meeting each manfully and using it to the full as we come to it. As *Light on the Path* shows us, the disciple does not expect or seek, as does the man of the world, an easier, better lot for himself than for others. His resolve is to use all lots for the attainment of his purpose.

Servants of an Enduring Purpose

There is another factor that operates here. To make our own the ethical spirit of Theosophy, is to cease to live for self or for motives that are limited, or even affected, by death. Instead, in looking to Divine Wisdom, the True, the Good, the Beautiful, we become the servants of eternal purposes, using the infinite variety of life's changing means, all to the one unchanging end. In this we are reaching toward inner maturity. The unity of our purpose imparts a like unity to the diversity of our days. Long views become possible, knitting days and months and years together. We see past, present and future, our past lives and all that are to come, all in their relation to the one purpose that runs through them,—what each contributes to it, how the accomplishment in each becomes the starting point for the next. This liberates us from the dominion of fate and of the present. We no longer lose our identity in the changing parts we are called upon to play. We no longer take our colour, or thought of ourselves, from our circumstances—as though the self were different because, for the moment, it is rich or poor in worldly goods—but pass through all circumstances ourselves, true to what we are within ourselves, whether our outer rôle be that of slave or king. No work, no lot, is ever thereafter beneath the disciple, for he has reached the point where he is able to do all as it should be done, whole-heartedly, because of that to which it leads; but, because of that to which it leads, detached and unaffected by it.

Masters: the Brotherhood of the Great of Soul

Finally, as at once the polar opposite of Democracy and its perfect fulfil-

ment, Theosophy leads us to the recognition of the great Lodge of Elder Brothers of mankind.

When we have learned to look up, in the new dimension of being which Theosophy has opened to us, we find "no bar or wall" to stop our gaze, "where man, the effect, ceases and God, the cause, begins". As the infinite immensity of the heavens is not dark but filled with light, whose rays stream unbroken from the furthest stars even to ourselves, so the void which men imagine between themselves and the Supreme, is not void but filled with a descending hierarchy of spiritual life. Call the great beings who embody that life what you will—Planetary Spirits, Dhyan Chohans or Lords of Light, Avatars or Mahatmas; or Thrones and Principalities and Powers, Messiahs or Archangels or Prophets,—they are there, and it is through them, down that great Jacob's ladder, that life and light and spiritual consciousness come to us. We do not stand in the van of evolution, advancing without chart or plan into the unknown. As there was no beginning to being, so there is no "van" to evolution. Life, emanating from the Godhead, returns again to it, the serpent swallowing its tail, in endless procession of cycles. Before us are our Elder Brothers. The ideal toward which we strive, perceiving it gleaming for us far ahead, *has been* embodied, even as we desire to embody it; and it is from its embodiment in our great predecessors that it shines for us and draws us.

This is the truth of the spirit, the celestial mechanism of being; but it is far more than that. It is concrete, personal reality,—as we become aware when we ourselves, through the theosophic ethics and the theosophic life, become consciously concerned with the things of the spirit and its incarnation. Do we imagine that the great souls of the past, the saints and seers and sages, who have attained to Divine Wisdom and embodied it, giving their hearts and lives to the aiding of mankind,—do we imagine that they have been snuffed out by death, or that their purposes have changed because of death? They still live, still labour for mankind, still link it to its greater destiny, still look up to their "Father in the Heavens", and for love of Him still serve those whom He has given them. They are not abstractions, not ghosts, "whether in the body or out of the body". They are living men, to be known, by those who are ready, as men,—as friend and teacher and Master. They have been met in Paris and London and New York, as well as in the deserts of Egypt, the Alps, or the inaccessible fastnesses of the Great Lodge in the Himalayas. "Knowledge exists and is obtainable". Man is neither fatherless nor friendless, and when the chêla is ready, he finds his Master waiting for him.

It is to that great Lodge of Masters, of "just men made perfect", that our Society owes its origin and its knowledge of Theosophy; and wherever we may be in the great sweep of evolution, be we young souls or old, ignorant or learned, rich or poor in things of the world or of the spirit, it is to that living Brotherhood of our Elder Brothers that the theosophic attitude and method, the theosophic spirit and the theosophic life, all act to draw us.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

ESOTERIC DISCIPLESHIP[1]

IT is difficult to write on the occult side of life without placing temptation in the way of a certain type of unprepared reader. To toy with such expressions, for instance, as spiritual growth and progress, is dangerous, for they tend towards self-glorification. This warning is particularly addressed to those who have allowed themselves to become dazzled by the glamorous psychism which so many confuse with spiritual insight. Psychic faculties come as a blessing only when they fulfil a spiritual need. As the consummation of an unlawful ambition, they are pure temptation,—temptation that has not been resisted. It is well, however, to remember that temptation can be a man's greatest spiritual need, for it presents the opportunity of resistance, and resisted temptation becomes a mighty blessing. It is an occult maxim that no man is ever tempted beyond the strength of his will to resist, if he chooses so to exercise that will. Hence a man's surest protection is a strong and powerful purpose to find and to do the will of God. Such a purpose is neither will nor desire, but is a soul-hunger born out of spiritual evolution, and has become as essential an attribute of some men as weight is of iron. It cannot and does not keep a man from stumbling off the path into the morass of self, but it does not leave him there, for always it points steadily away towards God. Without such an unbending purpose, man had better leave psychism strictly alone, and give his attention instead to that other and more practical side of occultism known as "metaphysical" or abstract thought.

Like psychism, abstract thought develops its own peculiar temptations which he will do well to heed but which are, generally, of a more natural and wholesome order than are those of psychism. Unlike psychism, it develops, not spiritual illumination itself, but the capacity to receive such illumination. The fact that the more widely known schools of "metaphysical" thought possess little spiritual insight, does not alter the more significant fact that they continually bring individuals face to face with the "Dweller on the threshold". It is not capacity, however, but only the steadfast purpose towards God which enables the wayfarer to pass that unholy beast and enter into the light of spiritual illumination. The struggling soul is forced to choose between the right- and the left-hand turns of the path. In one direction lies that manifested love which is oneness with God the Father and with man the brother, and in the other direction lies separation—self—selfishness. At the very point of demarcation, ready to lead him one way or the other, stands his conception of the "I am" consciousness, the divine man as opposed to the mortal. Has he, without realizing it, sought to expand his ego to the proportions of God-Almighty, or has he, in true humility, attempted to surrender his mortal limitations and

[1] The author of this article is not a member of The Theosophical Society. His approach to Theosophy and his terminology being somewhat different from our own, we believe his restatement of truths so often expressed in our pages, will prove of interest to our readers.—EDITORS.

allow himself to be absorbed into, to become one with, God the Father? In the beginning the point of difference is very subtile, very dim—so dim in fact that the spiritual babe can only judge surely by the fruit of the tree.

What are some of the fruits of error? Always they manifest as some more or less subtle form of self or separation. Many "metaphysicians", for instance, seek in the name of expediency or truth or love, to use Cosmic Law to gain for themselves health or wealth or power; do in short seek to exploit God for their own personal benefit. It is not by thinking of himself that mortal man can approach the Father, but by forgetting himself. He must lose his life if he would save it, and this must be done spontaneously, without mortal contriving. Even as he condemns "mortal mind", he fails to perceive that he uses that same mortal mind in the effort to demonstrate Cosmic Law. Divine mind could not seek such demonstration, since it is already a spontaneous and continuous demonstration of such law. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God (spiritual consciousness) and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." He perceives the illusionary nature of evil, but he fails to discern clearly the cause behind it; fails to realize that mortality is the unforgivable sin. Just so long as he continues to nurse that utterly false sense of separation—that Satanic lie—just so long will its offspring "self" continue to be the beast that bars the way to God. Though he may use his affirmations to drug into submission one erroneous little effect after another, they will continually spring forth anew so long as he fails to destroy that which breeds them.

It is important, however, to remind oneself that error is only the reverse side of truth. The blacker it seems, the more glorious is the truth it camouflages. Multitudes of people have turned towards the painful awakening which lies to the left. Each of these many souls perhaps cherishes or will cherish this experience as his greatest blessing. Who but the "Prodigal Son" can best appreciate the Father from whom he has been so painfully separated? Man first conceives the possibility of the true, then believes it and at the last perceives it. This true perception, however, comes only through that great and vibrant experience which initiates the disciple into the very fringe of the White Brotherhood itself. If, then, you are still a prodigal son, be not dismayed, for it is your glorious destiny to experience this awakening.

. . . . . .

How can a sound civilization spring from the loins of a people who are constantly ready to sell that civilization to the highest bidder? Let us take the liquor interests, for example. Have they not bid in the finest we have both in art and technical resources, and prostituted them to the spread of the drink habit? In particular, one well done advertisement pictures a wholesome-appearing group of young people drinking beer, with a campus scene for a background. The tragic thing about this picture is not the beer, but the sinister hypocrisy or psychic dynamite which seeks to enter the back way of our consciousness and surround this drink with a halo of good taste and respectability.

The expert who planned this advertisement thinks of it as the fine art of

suggestion. In reality it is twin to the dark arts of the Middle Ages. We ourselves commonly call it propaganda, and in the Orient it is known as black magic. In truth this advertisement is but a single isolated example of that great volume of publicity which has worked to make our people mental slaves.

If you think this indictment is too melodramatic, meditate a moment on the self-evident dishonesty of the advertisement and consider how typical it is of the insidious influences which permeate society through and through. Influential schools exist solely to turn out exponents of this art of suggestion. Every corporation has its corps of men trained to get possession of the other man's mind, not to help him, but to exploit him. Little wonder then that every great faith has set its face dead against this kind of magic.

Why do we as a people fall victims so easily to such propaganda? It is because we are already enslaved; are already the victims of the less obvious side of this very same thing. Out of past propaganda have arisen our varied systems of thought. It has moulded our social structure, with its accumulation of precedents and habits, into its present form. Propaganda for us has, in truth, become the world, and this world has exploited us with the hard grip of authority.

To surrender our souls to this authority—this mortality—is to give up our spiritual identity; to number ourselves among the dead. When the world begins to smother us; when we feel ourselves slipping, we sometimes seek to escape through religion, and all too often we find there only another authority masquerading as the truth that sets one free. Of course we cannot escape the world by substituting one form of authority for another. We must substitute the truth for the world, and we can find the truth only by seeking for God the Father in the inmost recess of our own soul, as the Master bade us do two thousand or more years ago.

If you will do this, if you will only try to do this, you will discover a very wonderful thing. You will find that the world on which you have relied is false and artificial; is in short a colossal lie. You will actually perceive this as you perceive the rising sun. You will perceive that the world is identical with the idea of separation—the Satanic lie. You will perceive that every discord which erects a wall between man and man is a manifestation of this sense of separation, of which the personal self is the concrete embodiment.[2] Most wonderful of all, you will discover that in escaping the world, you have fulfilled the law; have become subject to the only genuine authority there is,—the reality of your oneness with God the Father.

Harmonious things unite us in an unbreakable bond. The common love of beauty, for instance, which draws a crowd to an art exhibit, cannot be dissolved by a material cause as could the mere co-operation of a labour union. The labour union symbolizes that type of brotherhood which is a union of selfish, or in any case material interests. The other symbolizes that spiritual brotherhood in which separation disappears. It has been pointed out that though a cup of sea water is individual to itself, it is in its essential attributes

[2] The duality of the universe in its manifestation is so evident, with good and evil as an outstanding "pair of opposites", that it is all the more necessary to emphasize the underlying, invisible Unity.—EDITORS.

not separate from the ocean, or from another cup of sea water. All, for instance, have the same specific gravity and the same chemical content. Separation is the road towards the annihilation of *individuality*. Every step on the path trod by the Master breaks down a barrier. With shame we realize what a fool's paradise we proud and arrogant mortals have lived in, for we cannot escape the fact of our own being. Even as we erect our walls of personal superiority, we are dependent on the appreciation of our fellows in which to reflect our ego; else we smother. We perceive that Divine love must ever carry within itself the element of sacrifice; that God the Father, being all in all, cannot receive but must give; can only pour his life into the myriads of forms that make up this objective world; that this sacrifice of the infinite to the finite is Divine love in action. All the pain of sacrifice belongs to the limited or mortal. For the limited to further limit or sacrifice itself for others, seems like death, and it resists desperately. It is not until we open our soul to the infinite life of the Father that we transform the pain of sacrifice into joy.

Having perceived that worldly authority is indeed a false god, we no longer identify true teaching with it. Instead, with a profound sense of safety, we recline in the arms of love, knowing that the Father could never trust the spiritual welfare of one of his children to the mortal mercy of another; that no orthodox or intellectual interpretation has the spiritual right to lay the hand of authority upon us, save to show us the spurious nature of authority itself.[3]

Jesus had no "beliefs". His strength did not lie in a group of convictions, but in his actual perceptions. He *knew*. Having submerged his humanity in a divine individuality, he perceived all things with the same finality with which we selfishly perceive the things affecting our own persons. However, no soul can appropriate the truth for another. Perceiving this, Jesus informed his disciples it was expedient that he go away in order that the Holy Ghost (truth) might come and lead them into all truth. Actually his dazzling and objective presence stood between them and the full inward perception of the truth necessary to their complete unfoldment. Although he had spoken often of the truth, Jesus had made little public effort to expound it. Instead, his whole ministry had been one long, strong effort to lead people into a way of life that would develop the spiritual grace to realize the Father for themselves.

Nevertheless the conception of Master and disciple is a true conception, although the sole purpose of the relationship is to help the pupil towards the

---

[3] As the popular attitude toward religion has become increasingly sceptical, or increasingly indifferent, the recognition of worldly or external authority in religious matters has diminished proportionately. Instead, the authority of science is accepted as wellnigh absolute. Hence, as people no longer worry about their souls but only about their bodies, the priest has been supplanted by the doctor, whose verdicts are regarded as final. Superstition has merely transferred its allegiance.

It is not only in scientific matters, however, that people accept authority credulously. In America especially, a lingering "inferiority complex", the origin of which is easily traced, and which manifests itself at times as national boastfulness, has resulted in an extravagant respect for the opinions of professional critics of art, music, and literature. The man who distrusts his own judgment of books, probably with reason, will join in praise of some much advertized "best seller" which, in many cases, is both trashy and unclean, but which has been lauded to the skies by reviewers, whose motives are not always untainted, and whose intellectual and moral background in any case, is likely to be as shallow and uncultured as that of the man who accepts their opinions with respect. The same is true in the domain of art and music: people are afraid of what others (their own children particularly) will think of them, and are mortally afraid of not being "in the swim"; from which it follows that good and honest souls, in spite of their better instincts, will admire some crazy statue or lunatic painting, and will "enjoy" the worst of insults to their ears, for no better reason than that "authorities" have proclaimed these psychic sloughings as the latest revelation of the world's intelligentzia.

It is to be hoped that students of Theosophy are on their guard against this type of mass suggestion.—EDITORS.

same attainment as the Master's. The spiritual humility of Jesus contained not the slightest hint of servility. Rather it consisted of the clear perception that the lowliest beggar along the wayside possessed the same franchise to live in God's universe as the noblest soul who walked the way; that each and every one of us can stand face to face with the highest Archangel in heaven and declare our will to go direct to the Father for our truth. Piercing through the disciple's mask of personality, the Master perceives his actual spiritual condition, and throws around him those circumstances most favourable to his unfoldment. One might spend endless hours teaching the mechanics of swimming to a small boy, or, if he be that kind of boy, one might throw him bodily into the pool and he would immediately swim very well. In every faith those who have attained have endured a soul-shattering experience somewhat analogous to this. Beset by seemingly supernatural situations that seem to him unique, the disciple is unable to turn to his fellows for help. Apparently deserted by his very God, he does finally, in agony and desperation, turn inwards, and there in the secret place of his own soul finds his saviour, the Christ, in whom we are all one. Did not Jesus on the cross cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me", and did not the Christ in his physical incarnation symbolize the evolution of humanity?

In the world of religious organizations and denominations, and in the minds of countless individuals, there are innumerable personifications and objective conceptions of Jesus. There can be only one conception of Christ, however, for if we perceive Christ at all, we perceive the truth which is enduring and changeless. In the same way there can be only one true conception of man, of the real man, created in God's image. Our task is to perceive the real self of our brother through the eyes of Christ; through the understanding of love. There is only one such man.[4]

It is an absolute fact that those who truly desire to do so, can perceive the truth. But genuine desire is a spontaneous hunger of the soul, and cannot be generated by human foresight. Many desire to perceive the truth as a means to an end; the acquisition of health and wealth, for instance, or to gain virtue or power, or out of plain curiosity. How many reach for the truth as a flower reaches for the sunlight! Intellect can inform us that there is a threshold to be crossed; can even carry us to that threshold; but only that earnest faith and purpose, stressed by the Master, can carry us across and through the fearful shadows of the unknown. Spiritual illumination always follows, never precedes this experience. And whence comes so courageous a faith? It comes from the absolute awareness that having put our hand to the plough, to look back would be retreat, away from God; and to the unfolding soul this would seem like annihilation.

Evil is the manifested effect of the sense of separation, the spiritual lie. If we could rise far enough above it, could view it from a sufficient distance, we

[4] Compare the *Avatamsaka-Sutra:* "Child of Buddha, there is not even one living being that has not the wisdom of the Tathâgata. It is only because of their own vain thoughts and affections that all beings are not conscious of this. . . . I will teach them the holy Way;—I will make them forsake their foolish thoughts, and cause them to see that the vast and deep intelligence which dwells within them is not different from the wisdom of the very Buddha."—EDITORS.

should perceive its apparently destructive nature transformed through Divine will into a constructive purpose. As the unforgivable sin and source of all lesser errors, separation presents to man a marvellous opportunity—the chance to escape its sway, the escaping being creation. How can a child realize its mother until she has absented herself? How can we become sons of God until we have walked through the darkness of separation? Goodness is more than innocence; it is purity plus experience; it is Divine self-realization. Faith, hope, courage, all those steps up which we lift ourselves towards Christ, are something more than three lovely aspects of the human soul. They are a bright and shining promise, our blessed assurance of that which is to come, for without fruition they would be dead and meaningless things. They are the vine which in eternity shall flower into perfect love and realization and into utter fearlessness.

The dauntless whistle of the small boy hurrying through the dark, is no less a manifestation of God's love in action than is the ascending prayer of the martyred saint. We are each one of us a little child. Our affirmations of truth are the spiritual whistles with which we bolster up our own hope, faith, and courage. Yet these noble qualities of the human soul can, in themselves, only lead us to the threshold of our destiny. "This mortal must put on immortality", said the great Apostle. We press onwards towards that Godlike transfiguration in which faith, hope, and courage become their own absolutes: divine love, realization, and fearlessness. Only in the peace of the Father can we finally rest, for the peace of God is truth itself.

H.C.B.

I will ascend
Into my Father's room, and through the courts
Below, for ever seeking, I will pass,
To brush the skirts of Inspiration
And touch the sleeves of Memory.
O great and gracious Father, hear and condescend
To guard, to cherish, to enlighten me.

—The Prayer of the Emperor Ching (Confucius).

REMARKS BY THE WAY

THERE would be no need to refer again to the abdication of Edward VIII if that tragic event had not exposed a failure, in some quarters, to understand an elementary principle of right and wrong. This failure, or, rather, this example of moral blindness, found expression in severe criticism by certain people in England and America of the Archbishop of Canterbury's broadcast Address of December 13th, 1936, dealing with "the change of rulers in Britain and the Empire". The Address was characterized as uncharitable, unchristian, and as the equivalent of "hitting a man when he's down". Incidentally, we do not know in what sense the former King can be considered as "down". He was not kicked out; he left of his own accord, and in spite of the protests and pleading of his family, his official advisers, and of practically all his people.

However, to enable our readers to consider the matter intelligently, we shall first cite the opening passages of the Archbishop's Address,—the passages that provoked criticism:

During the last ten days we have seen strange things. Very rarely in the long course of its history has this nation passed through a week of such bewilderment, suspense and anxiety. Within twenty-four hours one King went and another King came. Yet there has been no confusion, no strife, no clash of parties. Truly, this has been wonderful proof of the strength and stability of the throne. It has been even more striking proof of the steadiness of the people of this country and those throughout the empire. It seems as if a strong tide of instinct rather than seasoned thought, flowing deep beneath the surface-eddies of excitement, has borne them through the rapids of the crisis.

It is right to be proud of the way in which the nation has stood the test. Yet let there be no boasting in our pride. Rather let it pass into humble reverent thankfulness for this renewed token of the guidance of the nation's life by an over-ruling providence and God.

What pathos, nay what tragedy, surrounds the central figure of these swiftly moving scenes. On the eleventh day of December, 248 years ago, King James II fled from Whitehall. By a strange coincidence, on the eleventh day of December, last week, King Edward VIII, after speaking his last words to his people, left Windsor Castle, centre of all the splendid traditions of his ancestors, and his throne, and went out an exile. In the darkness he left these shores.

Seldom if ever has any British sovereign come to the throne with greater natural gifts for his kingship. Seldom if ever has any sovereign been welcomed by more enthusiastic loyalty. From God he had received a high and sacred trust. Yet by his own will he has abdicated—he has surrendered that trust. With characteristic frankness he has told us his motive. *It was craving for private happiness.*

Strange and sad it must be that for such a motive, however strongly it pressed upon his heart, he should have disappointed hopes so high and abandoned a trust so great. Even more strange and sad is it that he should have sought his happiness in a manner inconsistent with Christian principles of marriage, and within a social circle whose standards and ways of life are alien to all the best instincts of his people. Let those who belong in this circle know that to-day they stand rebuked by the judgment of the nation which had loved King Edward.

I have shrunk from saying these words. But I have felt compelled for the sake of sincerity and truth to say them.

Next, after praising the former King's earlier years of "eager service", the Archbishop added: "It is remembrance of these things that wrings from our heart the cry, 'the pity of it, Oh, the pity of it!' "

He then spoke of Queen Mary in terms of great admiration and respect; referred to Prime Minister Baldwin as "the other person who earned our gratitude"; assured his listeners, on the strength of personal knowledge, "of many years of friendship", that the new King, George VI, has "high ideals of life and duty, and will pursue them with quiet steadfastness of will" as his father did before him; spoke of Queen Elizabeth's grace and charm, "and her bright and eager kindness of heart", and then, recalling the nation to religion, prayed that the Coronation, which will consecrate the King and his Kingship "to the service of the most high God", would be "accompanied by a new consecration of his people to the same high service", so that both King and people "acknowledge their allegiance to God, and dedicate themselves to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness".

Edward's avowed motive for abdicating, as the speaker said, was the "craving for private happiness" (words italicized *by us* in the quotation): preferring his pleasure to his duty, he abandoned his duty. That abandonment of duty inevitably compelled the Archbishop of Canterbury, "Primate of All England", to perform his own, which was to leave no excuse for doubt as to the moral principles involved, and to see to it that his "flock" was not left in ignorance of the real issues.

Every member of the Church of England has been taught the Catechism, and has learned that a part of his obligation to his Neighbour is "to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me". Open defiance of that elementary principle compelled the Archbishop to say what he thought about it, especially as the defiance came from a man who had been "called" to be England's King,—especially, too, as the Archbishop must realize that half the woes of the world are due to the same cause: the abandonment of duty, to parents, to wife or husband, to children, to associates, to country, for the sake of some imagined gain or pleasure.

We hold no brief for the Archbishop, one way or the other; but we believe in fair play, and feel bound to say that we greatly admired his Address, for its directness, its courage, its charity, its good taste. It expressed exactly what the circumstances demanded, and was, in our opinion, most timely.

How account for the criticism it aroused?

In the first place there are those who adopt the attitude that all moral offences should be ignored or condoned; that even when a man admits he has stolen or murdered, it is uncharitable to call him a thief or a murderer. Some humanitarians thus pervert the idea of Brotherhood. But the humanitarian, who attributes to man an origin entirely animal, necessarily finds it almost impossible to recognize evil, no matter how obvious to others, and is logically forced to condone the little that he recognizes,—except the evil of those who both see it and refuse to condone it.

As to the so-called Christians who have upbraided the Archbishop for his

unchristian behaviour on this occasion,—whatever their ideal, it certainly is not Christ; for if ever there were a master of invective, denunciation, and scorching irony, he was that master,—a Master whose infinite tenderness, and whose love of all things godlike, can alone account for his unsparing condemnation of evil and evil-doers. Those who claim to be his followers, and who do not revere that splendour of his nature, take as their ideal, we fear,—themselves.

The second explanation of these attacks on the truth-telling Archbishop, compels us to be as frank in regard to English peculiarities as the QUARTERLY invariably is when dealing with those nearer home. To be of service to others, we must see, first ourselves as we are, and then must see others as they are,—truly. So, while the world is full of praise, and with reason, for the superb way in which the British Empire met, dominated, and came out all the stronger for, its betrayal by Edward, it is our duty to speak of the emotional reaction which followed the relief felt when he had finally removed himself, and when the Duke of York had quietly stepped into his place as George VI.

This emotional reaction—fortunately it was not widespread—brought to the surface the sentimentality which invariably affects, and at times controls, English public opinion. It masqueraded on this occasion, as so often in the past, in the guise of "good sportsmanship". The rule of the ring, "Don't hit a fellow when he's down", applied regardless of common-sense and of justice, led to the pro-German sentiment, and to the revulsion against France, which caused England to shut her eyes to German re-armament, while she allowed her own army, navy, and air force to sink into a state of "innocuous desuetude". This lasted for years. Friends of England in this country—the QUARTERLY among them—groaned at her obstinate blindness. Not until Germany's reoccupation of the Rhineland in violation of the Versailles Treaty, and Italy's rape of Abyssinia, did England come to her senses. That is history.

The same streak of sentimentality threatened for a day or two, during the first week of December, to mislead England as to the issue really involved in their King's desire to marry Mrs. Simpson. Thanks to the skill of Stanley Baldwin, that danger was passed, and when Edward at last stepped down, and his brother was on the throne, the whole nation breathed a sigh of intense relief,—not with wild rejoicing, as at the time of the Armistice, but almost prayerfully, as though the Empire had survived some agonizing test of her spirit,—as she had, for if sentimentality had won, it would have meant the end of England.

Quickly, however, among the weaker, less steadfast element, came the reaction from this feeling of relief: pity for the man instead of pity for his soul. Such people had not realized the enormity of his offence. They did not want to realize it. They wanted the luxury of feeling "charitable". So, when the Archbishop spoke as he did, their sentimentality vented itself against him.

"From all evil and mischief; from sin; from the crafts and assaults of the devil", and especially from sentimentality, *Good Lord, deliver us.*

* * *

WITHOUT CENSOR

IX.

THE St. Mihiel salient lay between the Moselle and the Meuse, and was roughly in the form of a triangle, with the points at Pont-à-Mousson, St. Mihiel and Verdun. The western face of the salient ran along the thickly wooded heights of the Meuse, while the southern face, following the heights of the Meuse to the east, crossed the plain of the Woëvre. Within the salient were two commanding heights, Loupmont and Montsec, from which, and from the heights of the Meuse, one can see the entire plain, with its forests, lakes and swamps, and these three points constituted important observation stations for the enemy. For almost four years the Germans had been in practically undisputed possession of the St. Mihiel salient, save for several earlier French attacks which had been repulsed. Since then, the Germans had held the salient largely with second rate troops, but they had greatly strengthened its natural defensive features by extended field fortifications, and by a network of barbed wire entanglements which ran along the entire front. From the outpost system, with its concrete dug-outs and machine gun emplacements, running back to the rear of the salient, were several defensive positions, the last of which was the Hindenburg Line, which extended across the base of the salient and formed the main defence. Back of the Hindenburg Line were other defence points, and in the rear were the permanent fortifications of Metz and Thionville. From the German point of view, these great field fortifications, within the salient, protected Metz and the Briey Iron Basin, and were a constant threat on the flank to any major operation which the French might project in Lorraine. The salient had been more than a threat; it had greatly hampered the French in the defence of Verdun. It would always have been a threat on the flank to any Allied offensive, either to the east or to the west of the Meuse, which might have had as its objective the cutting of the German railroad lines of communication between Sedan and Mézières, the key of their whole system of supply and of transport in the east. The reduction of the St. Mihiel salient was, therefore, a strategic necessity, before further Allied offensive operations could be started in that vicinity.

The original plan called for an attack in depth by the First American Army, with full exploitation of whatever success was gained, the purpose being, once the salient had been eliminated, to pierce if possible the main Hindenburg Line, and to go as much further as circumstances and conditions might permit. A still larger American offensive, however, on the Meuse-Argonne front was projected, to follow immediately after the St. Mihiel operation, and it was desirable that this second offensive should start as soon as possible. Moreover, the rainy season began usually about the middle of September; once it started, the plain of the Woëvre would become flooded, many of the roads would be

impassable, and military operations could only be conducted under great difficulties. In view of these factors, therefore, the original plan for the St. Mihiel operation was modified, the time for its inception was advanced, and the objective was limited to merely pinching out the salient itself and to rectifying the line, thus clearing the way for the immediate larger operation which was proposed, and freeing the Paris-Nancy railroad and the roads north from St. Mihiel. The main American attack was to be against the south face of the salient, where there were fewer natural features to be overcome, while our secondary attack was to be made simultaneously from the west, these two operations converging upon a definite point within the salient itself. The element of surprise was essential to the success of such an operation. The sector had been quiet for a long time. For some days, however, before the operation started, there had been more than the usual activity within the salient, and it was discovered from prisoners and deserters that the enemy was moving his artillery out of the area, and that apparently he was expecting an American attack. It seems probable that the German High Command, while not aware of either the size or the extent of the proposed American operation, had perfected their plans to withdraw to the Hindenburg Line in the event of heavy pressure. It seems equally probable that they were taken by surprise when our attack actually started, and that they had not believed it to be imminent. They started to withdraw as soon as our offensive developed, but it was then too late.

The concentration of our corps and divisions in preparation for the battle devolved upon the First Army General Staff, and, because it was the first time that Americans had been engaged in an operation of such magnitude, it was carried out with great care. The troop movement was most complicated, as many of the First Army units, arriving from the west via Bar-le-Duc, crossed the line of march of other units proceeding northwards. This unavoidable crossing of columns was eliminated by the issuance, by First Army Headquarters, of complete march tables for all units, which specified the roads to be used, the halts, and the exact locations of all moving units at certain designated hours. Troop movements on the roads were made only at night, and, in spite of the activity, at no time did the general appearance of the First Army sector change, nor were there signs of any increased circulation in our area; this may well have accounted for the disbelief by the Germans, in spite of their general uneasiness, that an attack in force was imminent. The moving troops bivouacked during the day in forests, or sheltered in billets, where they would be unobserved, resuming their movement after dark, either by truck or by marching. The First Army Staff, in view of the inactive character of the St. Mihiel front, had also an immense amount of other work to accomplish in a short time, covering the installation of telephone and telegraph wires, the construction of railroads, quartermaster supplies, hospitalization and evacuation of the wounded to the rear, and the ammunition supply. In view of the fact that the Meuse-Argonne operation was to start so soon after the completion of the attack at St. Mihiel, and that the First Army Staff was working at the same time on the plans for this second American offensive, actually issuing orders before the

attack started for the early withdrawal from St. Mihiel of certain corps and divisions, and for their movement to this new front, it is easy to imagine the terrific pressure and activity at First Army Headquarters.

When I again arrived at Saizerais on the morning of August 21st, after having spent the previous night at Liverdun, I found that First Corps Headquarters had moved in, and had assumed command on that day of the Eighty-second and the Ninetieth American Divisions, which were already in line on that front, receiving their sector training. Saizerais was about ten kilometers south of Pont-à-Mousson. The First Corps had taken over about seventeen kilometers of line, in a sector which, for a long time past, had been a quiet one. The general atmosphere of First Corps Headquarters was, therefore, far more peaceful at the time of my arrival than had been the case when, at Epieds, north of the Marne, I had first reported for duty in the middle of an active offensive. Saizerais was a small village, with a civilian population consisting wholly of old men, women and children, their main occupation being the cultivation of the fields and the tilling of the soil. While the houses and buildings were in bad repair, and while the whole appearance of the place bore mute testimony to the disintegrating effects of four years of war, and to the continual upheaval and confusion produced among the population by the constant presence during that period, either in the village or in its vicinity, of troops on their way to or from positions in the line, there was little actual destruction visible, in spite of the close proximity to the Front. The French inhabitants seemed cheerful and happy, and went about their daily duties in a regular and ordered way. The same "gentlemen's agreement" on both sides not to start anything, which had obtained in the Vosges, had been in force here, so that for a long time past the remaining civilians had been undisturbed. Nor did this peaceful atmosphere and generally quiet appearance of things change for some days. At first our troops, coming in for the offensive, were in the rear of the Corps Sector and were not in evidence. As they neared the front area, they concealed themselves in woods and forests in the daytime, until, as the First Corps Sector filled up with troops, all available wooded tracts anywhere near the front lines were permanently occupied by American units. It was at night that the activity took place. Then, all the roads were full of marching columns and of convoys of trucks and of trains, proceeding as rapidly as possible to the concealed positions designated for them for the next day, and their advance took place without a sign of a light of any kind and with a minimum of noise. The final dispositions were not made until just before the attack started; the artillery, heavily camouflaged, went into position only a couple of days beforehand, while the outposts and the forward lines continued to be held, up to the night of the attack itself, by the same units which had been continuously in line, in order to preclude the possibility of the Germans finding out, through prisoners captured in trench raids, the presence on their front of new American divisions. However, in spite of all our precautions and of this carefully preserved tranquil outer appearance, the Germans, through some sixth military sense, became increasingly restless as time went on. They did not resort to artillery bom-

bardment, for they did not want to start trouble for themselves in case their apprehensions proved groundless, but they became quite active in their efforts to take prisoners, and they made every effort to acquire fresh information from the air, especially after dark, searching out the Corps Sector in an effort to locate anything that looked like a major headquarters or a concentration of troops, and to spot any night circulation in the area, dropping bombs wherever they thought there might be an ammunition dump, and more than once proving successful in this last effort.

First Corps Headquarters were located in some small houses and in several corrugated iron shacks, all close together, on the extreme fringe of the village, and were connected by our Signal Corps wires with the front and the rear. It was only nine days since I had left the First Corps Staff at Fère-en-Tardenois. But things move rapidly in war-time, and I was delighted to find myself once more with this same group, so many members of which had done much, north of the Marne, to help make my efforts there more effective. At Saizerais I found the same atmosphere of general co-operation and of helpfulness, and everyone was already hard at work. Any organization, whether in war or in peace, takes its tone from those at its head, and the spirit at First Corps Headquarters was a living testimony to the high character and ability, as well as to the personal qualities, of both Major General Liggett and of Brigadier General Craig, his Chief of Staff. Here, at Saizerais, I found new encouragement and help in the person of General Liggett's aide, whom I had known only slightly during my previous tour of duty with this Staff, a man from civil life of about my own age, who was proving himself exceedingly adaptable and able in an important job. The extent to which, in war-time, a General's aide may be of value depends entirely upon the man himself; there is no limit, and there was none in this case. Altogether, I was looking forward with the keenest anticipation to all that was to take place during the next three weeks, and felt reasonably confident, in view of my congenial surroundings and of my experience with similar duties such a short time before, that I might be of some real service.

For the moment, it was largely a question of troop movement, and with the arrangements for this I had nothing to do personally, as it was all worked out between the appropriate sections of the Staff at First Army and at the First Corps. As the troops began to move up the Corps Sector, however, towards the front lines, it became my duty independently to advise First Army Headquarters of their positions, and to verify that they were on schedule, and to convey at the same time any observations that seemed pertinent. Later, when the attack itself had actually started, I was to report constantly during the day, and as soon as received, all information which came in to G-3, the Operations Section, covering the progress of the attacking divisions and the changes in the situation, not only on the First Corps Front, but on the front of the Fourth American Army Corps on the left.

For the first two nights at Saizerais, I slept on the floor in an old stable. I then secured a billet in the tiny house of a Frenchman, aged about seventy-five, but hale and hearty, who was sacristan of the village church, and with him I

remained for the rest of my stay. His hut, for it was little more, had no second story, and contained only three rooms. He occupied the room in the front, on the street; the middle room, which was without windows, was a combination kitchen and living room, with a large fireplace; the room in the rear, the window of which opened on the barn-yard, was mine. When I arrived, the old man took me to my quarters, and explained that this had been his wife's room; she had died only a few months before, and he had left all her things just as they had been on the day of her death, because, he felt, she would have wished it so. He inquired whether he should remove any of them, in order that I might have more room, but I hastily assured him that it would not be in the least necessary, and that I would take the utmost care to see that nothing whatever was disturbed. What he said was quite true. On the walls were some obviously family pictures. There, behind a curtain, were hanging her clothes and her dresses. Some books, mainly devotional, were on a shelf, together with a few vases and pieces of china. In a corner, on the wall, was a crucifix, with a prie-dieu below it, and hanging on a nail between were the beads she had used for so many years. From merely looking at that room and its contents, one could almost picture the character of the life which its occupant had lived. Poverty and hard work and days of toil had filled that life, but so had the love of things beautiful and real, and it had been animated by religious devotion and by the ties of strong family affections, and, I could not doubt as I saw the tears in the eyes of the old man, it had been crowned by long years of mutual love and trust, of mutual watchfulness and care.

I grew quite fond of my old man before I left him. I went to his church, as he suggested, and prayed there, and I used his wife's prie-dieu more than once for my own devotions, and told him so, and he seemed glad. In the daytime, he worked in the fields, in spite of his age, with his married daughters, whose husbands were at the front. Sometimes, however, in the evenings, when I reached "home" before he had retired, and when it was raining and chilly, we would start a fire in the kitchen, and would talk together for a while. Firewood was very scarce in France during the War. My host, however, had succeeded in securing possession of a thick beam of wood about ten feet long (it was shorter before I left), and we obtained our results by sticking one end of the beam into the fire-place and by starting a blaze under it until the beam itself had caught. After that, it was plain sailing. All that we had to do to keep the fire going was to push the beam forward from time to time; when we had had enough, we pulled the beam out, and, in the interest of economy, kicked out the blaze. My old man remembered perfectly when the Germans were in France in 1870. I wish that I could recall some of his reminiscences. They are gone now, I am afraid, after this long lapse of time. But I do remember that he told me that the *sale Boche* of to-day was the same then; that frightful atrocities had been committed by the invaders in 1870, and that people had forgotten those facts now, there being so few left who, like himself, could actually remember what had taken place. His was an interesting and lovable character, but living with him, I felt, was living pretty close to the soil. Immediately behind the

head of my bed, in the barn-yard, was the manure pile, the French peasant's patent of nobility (it was thought in the A. E. F. that a peasant's wealth was appraised in terms of the size of this landmark), which emitted at all hours of the day and night a penetrating and stimulating aroma. The floor of my room was three feet or so below the level of the barn-yard. Contrary to the custom in rural France, I always left my window open. Returning in the middle of the day upon one occasion, soon after my arrival there, to secure some papers which I needed, I found a dozen chickens scuttling about the floor of my room. The cow-shed was on the other side of the thin partition along which my bed was placed, and the one cow was moored by a chain to a staple on the other side of this wall. Ignorant of this, I went peacefully to sleep on my first night in residence, but awoke shortly afterwards, considerably startled, and trying to remember where I was and to imagine what was going on, for I could hear the clanking of a chain and the sound of deep, heavy breathing almost in my ear. All that had happened was, that the cow had become stiff from much lying down, and had merely decided to ease herself by standing up for a while, all of which had involved much pulling at the staple, and what were apparently some deep-breathing exercises on her part.

Busy and absorbed as I was in the preparations for the minor part which I expected to play in the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, it had never occurred to me that any change was at all likely to take place which would affect my status. I was surprised and startled, therefore, in the middle of the afternoon of September 2nd, to receive orders to report at once in person at Headquarters First Army, which had recently moved from Neufchâteau to Ligny-en-Barrois, from which town the St. Mihiel operation was to be conducted. I called up G-3 at First Army, and inquired from one of the junior officers there whether I was being sent for merely to receive additional instructions, or whether I was to come back to Headquarters permanently. Apparently he knew all about it, for, while he was guarded in his remarks, he told me that I was leaving the First Corps for good, and that General Drum had a new job for me at Army Headquarters itself. I felt the same familiar, obstinate stiffening of resistance which I always felt when my plans were unexpectedly changed for me, or when I was prevented from doing something which I wanted very much to do; I had set my heart upon being with the First Corps during this operation. However, this time it did not take me as long as usual to overcome my feelings, possibly because, in this instance, I had to move at once and to move quickly. I hurried around, reported to the Chief of Staff my new instructions, obtained the necessary transportation, bade a hasty farewell to such officers as were about, and packed my belongings. I remember that my washing was rescued from a peasant woman, who was in the very act of pounding it against a stone in the stream into which such drains as there were in the village all emptied, and that it lay, a wet heap, on the floor of my car during that trip of something over twenty miles. By the time I had started it was evening, and we drove with all possible speed, for not only did I wish to reach Ligny in time to receive my new instructions that night, if possible, but I also wanted to arrive before darkness

fell. Driving at night in France in war-time, without lights, on crowded roads, was no treat; it was usually done at full speed, on the crown of the road, on the theory that the faster one is going when one strikes another vehicle, the better chance one probably has. It was dark, however, before we had gone half way, and I arrived in an entirely strange town in pitch blackness. The Military Police directed me to Headquarters, where I found a message at G-3 to the effect that I was to report to General Drum the first thing next morning. I managed to secure a billet in the town; was received by a stout, elderly female who did not seem at all glad to see me at that late hour; was given a room on the very top of the house, the worst possible place in the event of an air raid, and went supperless to bed.

On the following morning, September 3rd, General Drum told me that he had sent for me because the First Army Message Centre had not been functioning properly, and that he wanted me to take hold and to put it on an efficient basis. He informed me that the officer formerly in command of the Message Centre had been relieved, and that I was to take his place; that I would find things in much confusion, but that it was imperative that everything should be straightened out with a minimum of delay and that the Message Centre should be so thoroughly reorganized that it would function without a hitch from then on, as it constituted an essential element in the working of the entire First Army Headquarters. He told me to assume command at once; to make a survey that day of the situation as I found it, effecting at once any minor changes of organization which I thought desirable, and to make a report to him again as early as possible on the next day, this report to include any suggestions or recommendations which had occurred to me.

The First Army Message Centre, which at that time was included in G-3, the Operations Section of the General Staff, was responsible for the speedy, secret and accurate transmission of all Field Orders, Troop Movement Orders, dispatches, official correspondence, and all communications connected with the First Army. The Message Centre received such documents, reports and letters not only from the General Staff of the First Army, but also from General Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces, from French G. H. Q., and from the Headquarters of the Armies on our right and on our left, and at once routed these various communications to their proper destinations, delivering them to the indicated Section of the General Staff within First Army Headquarters itself by messenger, and transmitting them by motor-cycle courier whenever they were addressed either to units operating under First Army command or to other units and headquarters outside the First Army Area itself. In addition, there was, of course, a constant flow of similar communications and reports from the Army Corps and Divisions within the First Army, designated either for specified Sections of the First Army Staff or for destinations outside the First Army Area, and these also had to be immediately sorted out and delivered by whatever method was appropriate. There was also a return flow of messages, dispatches and reports from the First Army General Staff back to those higher headquarters from which the First Army was receiving its orders, instructions

and information. At that time the personnel of the Message Centre, which was later increased, consisted of another captain and of about a dozen other officers, of whom two were French; of about thirty non-commissioned officers, field clerks, interpreters and privates; and of about twenty-five motor vehicles, including Ford cars, Ford trucks, motor-cycles and motor-cycle side-cars, with the necessary chauffeur personnel to operate them.

The Message Centre was located in what had formerly been a small private bank in Ligny-en-Barrois, and the long counter in the front was exceedingly well adapted for the sorting and re-routing of the dispatches and documents as they were received. The enlisted men used as messengers to other departments of the Headquarters sat in a row on a bench opposite this counter. The room in the rear, formerly used by the bank manager as his private sanctum, I at once turned into a headquarters for myself, having there with me the three officers under me who were highest in rank, as my second in command and general assistants. It did not take very long to discover that General Drum had put it mildly when he had said I should find things in much confusion. Chaos reigned. Dispatches and communications which should have been delivered forty-eight hours previously were still lying about. Others, which had come in that day, were piled in heaps on the counter. There was no system at all. As nearly as I could make out, the previous incumbent had been trying to deliver dispatches direct to units moving on the road down to regiments, an impossible thing to achieve. Without having asked for the march tables, which would have enabled him to determine their approximate positions, he had simply sent couriers out with general instructions to find the units, and in many cases the dispatches had been brought back undelivered, while others had banked up at the Message Centre in the meanwhile, resulting in further delay all along the line. It took only a short period of investigation to reveal the fact that I was up against the stiffest job in my military experience, and I knew very well that, if the mess was not straightened out at once, I should be blamed personally for the shortcomings of my predecessor. But of far more importance than mere personal considerations was the fact that the jumping-off hour for the St. Mihiel offensive was only nine days off. There was a time limit to the actual work of reorganization. I felt that this work must be completed within forty-eight hours. That would still allow a week before zero hour, and I thought that, granted increasing efficiency and accelerating speed of transmission each day, it would not only be possible to catch up on back work, but also actually to advance matters to the point at which all combat headquarters would have received final orders, not at the last moment, but well ahead of time. I realized, however, that if I were to follow my first impulse, and were to start to attend to details myself, I should be lost. It was a case of allotting all details to subordinates, and of retaining a proper perspective of the whole organization and problem, keeping myself free to give the necessary impetus and to impart the driving power needed at this point or the other. I worked hard all that day, and until late that evening, with short stops for food, and by the time I felt free to go to bed, leaving my second in command on the job for the night—the

Message Centre was open and functioning both day and night—I felt that I had at least made a beginning at bringing order out of chaos.

Certain fundamentals were obviously wrong, however; that was clear. When, as I had been directed, I made a report to General Drum on the following morning as to the extent to which I had been able to make progress, I told him that I thought it was going to prove impossible to continue to deliver orders and dispatches to individual units as far down as regiments. I suggested that the present system be adhered to in respect to all units just entering the First Army Area, but that, once they had entered the area of the army corps under the command of which they were to operate, the headquarters of that particular army corps should from then on be held responsible for the transmission of all orders and dispatches to the divisions and corps troops within its own sector. I told General Drum, however, that, even if this system was adopted and even if, as a result, I had a smaller volume of dispatches to handle than at present, it did not seem to me, in view of the necessity for speed, and of the possibility of unexpected and immediate demands for service, that the First Army Message Centre had sufficient motor transport to function under pressure as he would wish, and I asked for six more motor-cycles and the necessary chauffeur personnel to drive them. General Drum listened to these suggestions without comment, asked various questions, made certain observations and remarks, and told me to come back to see him the following morning.

I spent another hectic twenty-four hours, during which it seemed to me that some further progress in straightening things out and in speeding things up was made. I found that my subordinates were, almost all of them, an able lot; they had lacked direction and organization, and they were prepared to work to the limit once they knew what it was that they had to do. The next day, when I reported, General Drum handed me copies of two Army Orders which, he said, had just been issued. One of them embodied the suggestion which I had made, that, thereafter, the First Army Message Centre was to deliver dispatches only to the headquarters of army corps, and that those headquarters were to be responsible from that date for the further transmission to their own component units. The second Order required certain specified divisions under First Army command to send to the Message Centre First Army the additional motor transport and personnel for which I had asked. This immediate and whole-hearted support took my breath away. I must have shown my relief and my pleasure, for General Drum laughed, and told me to carry on as I was doing, and that if there was anything at First Army Headquarters which I needed in the way of information or to help me in my job, to ask for it, and to say that he had said that I could have it, and to tell him about it afterwards.

Hard work is easy, when one's superior affords co-operation and backing like that, and when one is given one's head. I went at things harder than ever, greatly encouraged, but *knowing*, then, that things were going to work out,—and they did, although that next week is still something of a nightmare in retrospect. I secured a large map of the area of the First Army front, and pinned it to the wall in the back room. Whenever an incoming courier gave us informa-

tion as to the temporary whereabouts of some unit which was moving in, a pin, with a piece of paper indicating the name and number of the organization, the date, and the hour, was stuck in at the corresponding point on the map. This map was kept up to the minute from other sources of information as well, and became a fairly accurate index of the moving troops. I really ran a sort of Bureau of General Information in addition, as officers of all ranks, from generals down, would drop in as they went through, or arrived at, Ligny-en-Barrois, with all sorts of questions, and, in turn, I picked up a great deal of helpful information from these sources. General Drum made several visits of inspection; he walked about, surveyed my dispositions and arrangements, asked questions, but made no comments. I remember that, upon the occasion of his first visit, I was using the telephone, and that I tried to rise and stand at attention, but that he walked rapidly up to my improvised desk, put his hand on my shoulder and pressed me back into my seat, and kept it there until I had finished, saying then that he had not come to interrupt me in my duties. Absence of any comment on his part was enough for me; if things had not been going well, he would have told me so on the spot.

Those few days were exceedingly hectic, but, little by little, we could see that our efforts were bearing fruit and that results which we wanted were beginning to appear; we breathed more freely, but drove ahead as hard as ever. The only bright spots were meals. I was at the G-3 Mess, at which there was one other captain and one major, the others all being colonels and lieutenant-colonels. We juniors were somewhat oppressed at first by so much rank, and were inclined to keep ourselves in the background, but our superiors would not stand for any "speak when you are spoken to" attitude on our part, and quickly made it clear by their geniality and humour that, during meals, we were all on a man to man basis. The conversation at mess was exceedingly interesting; everyone talked shop from start to finish, and cleared information, and I learned a great deal at each meal that was of the greatest help to me in my duties, although, through General Drum, I was receiving copies of all orders and memoranda as they were issued in order that I might know all that was going on. At meals, however, I often heard of decisions in advance, and was able to anticipate the issue of the actual order in the arrangements which I made at the Message Centre, and so to save time. The hard work for the staff at an army headquarters in the field comes well in advance of the actual start of an attack. On the last day, and as zero hour approaches, there is less and less to do. Finally the point is reached at which everything possible has been done, until reports from the attacking corps and divisions begin to come in. I was surprised when this short let-down came, but it gave one a breathing spell, and now that it was too late to retrieve any mistakes or omissions, I awaited with absorbed interest the results of the next two or three days.

At this point, a brief account of the actual operation at St. Mihiel may be of interest. On August 30th the First American Army had taken command of the front in the Woëvre, having in line, from right to left, the First American Army Corps, the Fourth American Army Corps, the Second French Colonial

Corps, and the Fifth American Army Corps. The main attack was delivered by our First and Fourth Corps on the southern face of the salient, our Fifth Corps made the secondary attack against the western face, while the French Corps made supporting advances on the flanks of our Corps and executed a holding attack at the tip of the salient. The total strength of the First American Army, including all corps and army troops as well as all combat units, when the battle started, was about 550,000 Americans and 110,000 French troops. Preceded by an artillery preparation which lasted for four hours, the attack on the southern face started at 5 A.M. on the morning of September 12th, and the secondary attack commenced three hours later, in a light rain and mist. By afternoon our attacking troops on the southern face were beyond the objectives scheduled for them, and by nightfall they had reached at many points the objectives allotted for the second day. Our progress on the western face was not so rapid, but by the early morning of September 13th our Fifth Corps had blocked the roads leading out of the salient on the west, and by dawn of the 13th, elements of our Fourth Corps had effected a junction at Vigneulles with our Fifth Corps units, and the salient was closed. Our general advance was continued on the 13th, and by the end of that day the final objectives set for this operation had been attained. Further limited offensive operations were continued by our First Army Corps, and, during the next three days, local operations continued along the entire front and several enemy counter-attacks were repulsed, while our troops consolidated their new positions for defensive purposes, and preparations went forward for the withdrawal of divisions and of corps troops for the Meuse-Argonne operation. In view of the disorder with which the enemy was retreating, it is extremely likely that exploitation of our success at this point would have resulted in further material progress. But the operation had recovered about two hundred square miles of French territory, and nearly 16,000 Germans had been captured as well as several hundred enemy guns. All menace to the prosecution of the Meuse-Argonne offensive from this source had been eliminated. Above all, the success of the St. Mihiel operation had greatly cheered our Allies. They could depend upon us now, they felt, and they were much encouraged, while the Boche was correspondingly depressed and was increasingly apprehensive as to what further trouble this new American Army might cause for him from then on.

The progress of our First Army Corps in this offensive had been of absorbing interest to me personally, in view of what I had known of the advance plans which had been made at those Headquarters up to the time of my departure, and of the fact that I had expected to be with them throughout this operation. Major-General Liggett had handled the concentration before the battle and the conduct of the Corps operations with great skill and vigour. The First Corps had in line, from right to left, the Eighty-second, Ninetieth, Fifth and Second American Divisions, with the Seventy-eighth American Division in reserve. The First Corps rested its right on Pont-à-Mousson. The entire Army line pivoted on the Eighty-second Division on the extreme right; this division, however, was only called upon to make a demonstration to the

east of the Moselle and to threaten the enemy position there. In the preliminary bombardment, 831 guns were used on the First Corps front. By noon on September 12th the Second Division, on the left flank of the First Corps, had taken the heights to the north of Thiaucourt. The Ninetieth Division and the right of the Fifth Division were held up that day by a strong enemy force in the Bois-le-Prêtre; during the following night, however, the enemy withdrew, and our units moved forward. On September 14th and 15th, the First Corps had continued its progress, until the lines were stabilized, after a total advance of ten kilometers on a front of twelve kilometers, during which many field pieces and machine guns, together with engineer and ordnance depots, as well as about 5,000 prisoners, were captured. The positions attained became at once a very direct threat to the German fortified area of Metz. The total strength of the First American Army Corps at St. Mihiel, consisting as it did of 6,177 officers and 168,120 men, was greater, as General Liggett has pointed out in one of his books, than Meade's and Lee's combined forces at the Battle of the Wilderness in our Civil War.

No account of the St. Mihiel operation, as far as I am concerned, would be complete without the addition of those comments upon it which my friend in the Movement in New York made in letters to me written immediately afterwards, and which follow:—"We are thanking Heaven that the American troops have done so well, though, as —— remarked the other day,—'Considering that America is at present the centre of His work, it would be strange if the deciding factor were not to come from here.' And they do carry more force than they realize. It is not merely youth and vitality and freshness. And that is why the tragedy would have been so appalling if America had not got in the War." "Splendid news from or of the First American Army. You can imagine how glad we are, for so many different reasons. Someone once said that the Master never has less than a score of major ends in view, when he acts. I can see at least how the —— is directly concerned, not only now, but in years to come. America has much to learn from France, but America has one gift to make to France, the setting of which is now being fashioned by American soldiers. We have of course guessed for several weeks—it seems like months—that Foch's big blow would be delivered by the American Army in the Metz neighbourhood. And I did not think he would wait for next year. He will surely keep things moving, now he has started them."

CENTURION.

(To be continued)

EDUCATION THROUGH THE ARTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

THE *Yoga Sutras* define Dharana as the "binding of consciousness to a certain region", and regard it as the first of three successive steps in meditation. As a subject for study in secondary schools, meditation would be out of place, even in the hands of a qualified teacher; but its importance as a means to attaining discipleship, and the only means, leads a theosophist who is engaged in the work of educating, to consider what faculties are most concerned in this first step; what subjects among those prescribed, best train these faculties; and how these subjects can be used as preliminary preparation for a realization of the goal when aspiration for it awakens.

There are certain fine qualities of mind and character to whose cultivation all good schools devote themselves. All courses in all departments contribute to this, provided that the school sustains this ideal in its life and atmosphere, and the individual teacher responds to this pressure, and is aware of the special function of her subject and its use for these ends. The training of the mind more naturally suggests itself as an important element in all branches of learning, and most school subjects have this in view. The value of an active, well-trained mind cannot be minimized, for articulate, clear thinking acts as check and balance. Yet the "whole man" is concerned, and the mind goes only a part of the way towards the preparatory steps we are contemplating. The importance of training the emotions, the heart and the imagination, is not so fully understood, is therefore not so consciously sought; the means to this training are not so well developed and practised; and the subjects which are recognized as especially concerned with them must give them such delicate handling, and approach them so indirectly, that the mind often usurps their place and they actually receive very little attention.

It is generally said that the fine arts are the product of feeling and imagination, and are the truest and most complete expression of the spirit of any age; that the inner spirit impresses itself in most lasting and vital form on poetry, music, painting, sculpture and architecture, and that any century when reason was dominant did not create beauty. Attention to these subjects, wherever the spirit that animates them is sincere and of high quality in whatever mood, should be one very effective way of creating similar moods. Especially in the formative years of the secondary school, when the feeling for beauty begins to awaken, they should be used to the full for the formation of discriminating standards of taste and the reaction of these standards on character. Observation over a long period of years has brought convincing proof of the efficacy of such teaching. Pupils move on into the wider opportunities of college or of life with a keen perception, ready to respond to the finest thing within reach in

music, painting, literature and drama. Their elders, therefore, parents and teachers, cannot escape the immense responsibility of accepting for them no substitutes for the best. When they learn to know and love the best in these special fields of the imagination, with their life-enhancing power, vulgarity on all planes will lose its appeal. The eye and the ear, their sensitiveness and soundness, are the only medium we know for gathering impressions which furnish us with the material for all psychic[1] and higher psychic experience. Educating them to differentiate among these forms of experience, must be supremely worth time and effort.

All the arts are equally open to this use, though music, especially singing, should perhaps come first. It is more completely immaterial, is more directly the product of emotion, acts more directly to kindle a like feeling, and requires no analysis to accomplish this. Singing, then, should form as large a part of a course of study as time permits, and should make many informal connections. It is as natural an impulse as speaking or walking, yet as a people we do not sing, and do not often hear good singing except in concert and opera. As we are confronted by an endless choice of songs, good, bad and indifferent, produced in every period, it is all-important that the songs be chosen and directed by a lover of music, whose taste has been formed by hearing much good music; who is not deceived by the prestige of great names or a lack of any name, but who feels sincerely fine and varied rhythmic patterns and interesting flow of melody. Good music appeals to an innate faculty and arouses the best that is in us: true feeling, sincerity and depth, courage, tenderness, humour, gaiety; not sentimentality and personal, superficial excitement and emotional strain which are expressed through cheap, insistent stresses and tiresome, shallow tunes. If good fundamental musical training is provided, we may preserve an open mind toward the modern musical forms. Such training develops a capacity for judgment that will lead the young modern musician to select the good and original among the new forms, though this must not claim too much of the scant time which the secondary school, and especially the college preparatory school, can devote to singing.

Folk-music provides ideal material for school singing. It is sometimes called the "wild-flower" of music in its fresh artlessness, and like the wild-flower it often has a formal beauty, which makes it excellent art and fundamentally sound in developing good taste in music and a love of singing. It often competes with that superlative interest in sports, and gives fine exercise to body as well as spirit. Folk-songs are becoming more readily available through collections of English folk-songs by Cecil Sharp, and French songs by Weckerlin. To read the life of Cecil Sharp by A. H. Fox Strangeways is to make the acquaintance of an artist and lover of his country, who endured for most of his life extreme ill-health and every discomfort of hard, unremitting travel, so that he might gather and preserve this heritage and true expression of his own people. He found thousands of songs that had never been sung out of their native environment, and

[1] "Psychic": used here in its true sense of "relating to or connected with the soul or spirit". Students of Theosophy frequently use the same word to signify the astral consciousness, or unreal world of fancy: so the passage must not be misunderstood.—EDITORS.

had never been noted or written down, in many parts of England, and among the mountain people of our southern states. By his integrity in noting and recording, he has performed an invaluable service; by his courtesy and understanding he won the hearts of people of every sort, and brought back a heartening belief in the unspoiled and endearing qualities and the grace of manner of these mountain people. To make the acquaintance of a man like Cecil Sharp, true musician and scholar, is one of the unsought privileges of adventure into this interesting field of study. Among genuine folk-music are the lovely carols which so enhance the spirit of Christmas singing. Especially the French carols have, in both words and tunes, a direct, unsentimental expression of simple, almost homely religious feeling. Perhaps the disciple with the Virgin and Lazarus did reach the shores of Provence as the legends say, and some spiritual deposit came to light here. There are also many beautiful songs composed in the spirit of folk-song from Schubert's time on, some suitable for group singing, and some which should be heard again and again until they are stored in memory.

The eye of the singing teacher should not pass too casually over the words to which tunes are sung. They are often unpoetic, and lower the tone of a charming tune. Again, there must be someone able to judge of the choice of words, their rhythmic beauty, and their spirit and meaning, so that spirit, words and melody may be harmoniously joined. How inevitably and naturally the principle of the hierarchy appears in this constant need of guidance! The intensive study of poetry as an end in itself, as well as for the light it sheds on judgment of the words of a song, giving it real importance through recitals, always results in a growth in taste, and almost always leads to the feeling among those who recite that it will be an inexhaustible resource. It is really an exciting experience to anyone interested in the education of the inner faculty of taste, to see how the choice of poems improves as the years pass; to find a girl who is searching for something that expresses her utmost reach, choose Hecuba's lines in *The Trojan Women* where she performs the funeral rites over the young child's body as it lies across her knees; or to hear from young lips "I wandered lonely as a cloud", or "Little lamb who made thee?" Walter de la Mare's *Come Hither* is easy reading for a lover of poetry, and such inviting reading in both choice of poem and comment, that it can hardly fail to awaken the love if a lover shows the way. Poetry instils a love of nature, appeals to our intuitive faculties. "The poets are the truth-tellers. They cannot deceive." The poetry that is clearly inspired, and so is beyond a purely mental interpretation, is the first intimation of mystic experience and points that way.

Drama, too, is a most fruitful occupation for youth, and requires nothing but time and opportunity to encourage it. It would sweep all other work out of the field if that were allowed. Good plays for high school age are quite difficult to find. They may be gay and young, but must be really innocent, refreshing and spirited in their humour. Great drama like Shakespeare has to be adapted and shortened to hold the enthusiastic attention even of loving parents, but this can be well done and is most rewarding, with really profound reactions in the char-

acter and outlook of those who take part and in the young audience. *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *Winter's Tale* are among the plays that leave impressions and can be attempted as complete plays; excerpts from other plays provide excellent memory work, and are often pure Lodge wisdom and nothing less. A group of young students, against the advice though not the prohibition of a timid faculty, presented *Cyrano de Bergerac* and later a wisely adapted version of *Peer Gynt*. In their reactions these plays are not merely romance. They evoke the power to grasp the elements of character in its resistance to the forces that prey upon the will. "To watch a character develop from the first flashes of contact in the actor's mind to the final moment when the character steps on the stage in full possession of the actor, whose personal self looks on somewhere in the background, is to be present at a great mystery. No wonder the ancient dramas were initiation ceremonies, if we can see it so, an initiation into what Emerson calls 'the empire of the real'."

Many recent plays given in New York and very generally through the country, have a significance that is definitely religious, or give a powerful and regenerating commentary on life. Among them are *Thomas à Becket*, *Joan of Arc*, *Ethan Frome* and an increasing number of Shakespeare's plays. Graduates of secondary schools which have stimulated interest and taste in the higher forms of the theatre art, may be left to themselves to seek entertainment in the better class of plays, rather than in the demoralizing and trivial. Robert Edmond Jones expresses an ideal and hope for the new generation:

> There are young people in this country who will really create for the theatre of their time, who will bring something into existence that has never existed before. A few. Not many. The theatre will be fortunate if it can claim a half-dozen of them. But it is this half-dozen to whom we look to lift our common experience into a higher region, a clearer light. We do not want shrewdness, or craftiness, or adroitness from them. We have enough of mechanism in the theatre and more than enough. Let them go beyond this: let them give us the sense of the dramatic moment, the immortal moment.
>
> Think of the moment. All that has ever been in this moment; all that will be in this moment. Both are meeting in one living flame, in this unique instant of time. This is drama; this is theatre—to be aware of the Now. But how is one to become aware? someone may ask. I answer, listen to the poets. They can tell you. . . . I will give you an example from Hamlet:
>
> "O good Horatio,
> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart
> Absent thee from felicity awhile."
>
> *Absent thee from felicity awhile.* Here are some of the most beautiful words ever written in the English language. But this is not all. The words are a plain record of fact. Hamlet, drawing his last breath as he spoke them, was not interested in phrase-making, nor was Shakespeare. Hamlet did not think of an exquisite phrase at that moment. He spoke out of a real vision of felicity, immortal. He saw the clear light, the happy forms. He called it felicity. He did not invent; he did not create; he saw and reported. . . . Poets know what they see is true. If it were not so they would have told you.

With such vision and leadership in the theatre, why should we not embody in drama the wisdom and aspiration of our time, as Greek poets in the drama of their day?

Last and most difficult in relation to taste are painting, sculpture and architecture; yet they directly exact so much clear thinking that they ought to be as fundamental in education as geometry and science; by a certain measured beauty they appeal to the mind as well as to the imagination and the heart. The study of the history of these arts is profitable but is not what is meant here. In the beginning it is a handicap, for knowing about pictures before knowing them, loads the mind with information before the eyes have learned to see, and clouds æsthetic vision. Unfortunately there are very few average homes that contain good art; the ideal school in supplying this lack must use tact and suggestion rather than arbitrary pronouncements. Pictures gain much by hanging on well-proportioned walls, for space-relations affect the emotions by reacting on the nervous system in ways not very well understood. They are further enhanced by a background pure in tone, not drab or dead even though there is no sharply defined colour scheme. Appreciation also increases by changing their position from time to time, so that the eyes may not become indifferent. From earliest years children enjoy pictures. If pleasure in good pictures can be fostered without dimming enthusiasm, a natural and wholesome growth in taste develops, from observing at first hand the contrast between the poor and the good; the good and the very good; a natural growth, for when the best is continually present in the surroundings, the choice eventually is right. The faculty of right choice is innate, and needs only time and opportunity.

Paintings and reproductions are chosen from modern and earlier art periods, by persons of judgment, for their beauty of significance, design and colour, and with care for their suitability. Naturally, sentimental art, merely pretty faces and scenes, superficial religious pictures, and all decadent forms of a spoiled and perverted taste are barred. The work of artists in any period who precede a too complete ease and fulness of expression, in general speaks the most powerfully to the imagination. Therefore the austere beauty of the Charioteer of Delphi, and the Mourning Athena, becomes ultimately more moving than the immediate satisfactions of the Venus of Melos; given time, Giotto will displace Murillo and Andrea del Sarto; the paintings of men of genius before Raphael induce a finer reaction than some of Raphael himself. Duccio and other Siennese painters are vastly more religious than modern religious painters, who are often mawkish and shockingly superficial. A fascinating reality distinguishes the Holbeins, and the early French and Flemish portraits of kings and commoners.

One becomes aware of these contrasts in the past, and in the same way, modern art is judged on its merits and in relation to its spirit and its own achievements and discoveries. Recent water-colour paintings of the young American Indians are far more stimulating, even to little children, than the modern thoroughly realistic illustrations and sophisticated drawings, and they set the children to drawing and painting too. The landscapes and figures of Cézanne are as sound in their constructive beauty and truthfulness as Bach's music. If sensitiveness to fine colour is ever to be instilled in human beings, these early years are the most impressionable and the most promising. Fortunately the

inventiveness of our own times and the effort to achieve fine colour, texture and cheapness in fabrics, should create a superior colour sense. One may see signs of this already in clothes and pillows, hangings and wall-paper everywhere.

We may accept without need of proof, the theory that evolution to a higher state of consciousness lies in part in a growing desire to see and hear the best, and that every accretion, especially in this young generation, helps to drive out satisfactions with inferior things, and so elevates the character, and creates the habit of choosing wisely upon which the Upanishads lay such stress. Good art is always sincere, is always simple, has always involved sacrifice, often poverty, intense application and an inward spiritual fire. Making these contacts for children by surrounding them with what is lasting in its beauty, beckoning them up and on, must be worth the time of teachers who are theosophists and especially dedicated to this service, but who, in point of honour, aside from good teaching, the disciplines of academic studies and social life, must depend largely on such means to establish standards in character, and on the contagion of their aspiration to associate only with the best. For they may not use the name Theosophy; are denied all forms of propaganda. They may not mention Karma; talk too freely about consciousness; and only in rare cases speak of such subjects as reincarnation, and only when the subject has been brought up first by someone else, as in the sixth book of Vergil's *Aeneid*, where the doctrine of the Logos and reincarnation are quite fully treated. Then we may welcome the chance, over and over with successive generations, to explain and enlarge on these subjects, and rejoice to find that the passing years make them more and more eligible for legitimate teaching and more susceptible to complete elucidation.

The contagion by example of what one loves and believes in, and its power to affect the character, of course rests absolutely on a basis of what one has assimilated so that it has become part of himself. No eye or ear is so quick to detect a false note and patter as that of youth. Belief in these arts as a means to spiritual growth, and the conscious though not obvious use to this end, must come from a profound conviction that they do serve this end. There are many openings to the lower world, and so in those subjects sanctioned for education, most closely related to spirit and most expressive of it, to care and care continually for the best, is a form of "binding the consciousness to a certain region" and should lead step by step to the ultimate goal of full understanding.

V.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Lenten season had just begun when we next met. It was natural, therefore, to discuss the benefits and evils of repentance. What is the use of it? Is not "forward-looking", creative imagination more profitable? We appealed to the Ancient.

"How can you accomplish anything, spiritually, without it?" he countered. "If I blunder to the injury of others, is my sincere regret, and my expression of it, waste of time? Whenever we sin—which means, whenever we violate spiritual law in thought or act—we injure the Master whose child we are, as well as injuring our fellows. That being the case, we are morally obligated to examine ourselves that we may learn why we went astray, and how, so that we may resolve not to commit the same fault again. Otherwise we go through life learning nothing, and shall go out of it worse off than when we came into it, because we shall have thrown away our Karmic (that is, God-given) opportunities. A man could spend his life exploring the cities and nations of the earth, and not gain a thing in any real sense. *Gain* is the increase we take with us when we die, and the only increase we can take with us consists of an improved character, a stronger will, a greater devotion, a clearer consciousness of our real self, of the real world and of the Lodge of Masters and of our own Master."

"But what is the use of wallowing in a conviction of sin?" someone asked.

"None whatever!" the Ancient agreed, smilingly. "There are, of course, those who use what *they* call their repentance as a pretext for self-parade; there are others who, without being guilty of that particular vulgarity, become so wrapped in gloom, so self-centred, because of their sins, that their so-called repentance does them more harm than good. In these cases the 'repentance' is simply an exhibition of the two poles of vanity; in the latter case, of wounded vanity. Unless we use repentance as a spring-board to bounce us, as it were, away from wrong to right, away from negativeness to positive and hopeful effort, we shall have failed utterly to understand its meaning or its value; and its value in the spiritual life is immense,—it is or should be one of our most powerful aids, providing us with a stimulus, an incentive, for ever-increasing effort.

"Is there one of us who, looking back at his life since he first heard of Theosophy—even at the past week—does not see that he has wasted his time and his opportunities to a deplorable extent? To brood over this would be weakening and foolish; but we are still alive; we still have to-day and perhaps to-morrow. Let us then *make up for lost time;* let us work, meditate, pray, as we have never done before; let us use our realization of failure as it should be used,—for constructive ends.

"Consider your waste of mental and nervous energy, the lack of purpose and

control of most of your daily thinking—that it is not thinking, but mere drifting, usually about yourself, or with 'I' as centre and end. Consider how you have squandered your emotions on trivialities, 'what torments of grief you endured from evils which never arrived', instead of using your emotions as generators of aspiration and of spiritual power. Then, from this realization—and unless the realization be keen and full of remorse, it will not help you—draw the determination to waste such wealth no more, but to control the direction of a force which is strong enough to stop the beating of your heart, and which is strong enough, also, to lift you to the gates of Paradise.

"What did the Prodigal Son do when he had returned to his Father? Did he spend the rest of his days weeping and wailing in a corner? No! At first, he was bowed to the earth, was moved to the depths of himself, by an overwhelming sense of his Father's love and generosity; but then pulled himself together, and resolved to make it his one remaining purpose in life to atone for his past sins and selfishness. Day after day, and all day, he would seek opportunities (let us hope with tact and discretion!) to serve his Father,—what is more, to serve his older brother, who had not, as you will remember, received him with open arms.

"Have not we too wasted our 'goods', our 'substance', with riotous living? Not perhaps in a material sense, but, without any question, in an inner and even more important sense: for, once more, what use have we made of our minds, of our emotions, of our imaginations? Have we not wasted them; and did we not derive every energy we possess, *in essence*, from our spiritual Father?

"A student of Theosophy who looks upon repentance as a relic of an outworn creed, has failed to understand the A. B. C. of Occultism and of spiritual progress."

"Before we drop the subject", interjected one of our editors, "may I please suggest that we ought also to study the story of the Prodigal Son, of the Pharisee and Publican, and other parables, as the greatest works of art that have come down to us from the past? Their brevity, their simplicity, their Greek purity, fill me with increasing awe. They are vivid as nothing else in literature is vivid; but they are more than perfect literature: they are music and sculpture and architecture and painting, all in one. The Master created the thing—saw it, heard it, as a living thing, compact in form and with infinite significance, *while* he put it into words. We should try, as we read them, to see as he saw, to feel as he felt. We shall fail in that, of course; but the effort in itself should bring us nearer to the heart of their mystery. If there were no other evidence of his divine greatness, the parables alone would prove that he was a Master of the Great Lodge."

"I, also", said the Student, "should like to add a postscript, as it were, to the Ancient's remarks, although mine is intended merely to stress his statement that the emotions are a far greater force, both constructively and destructively, even on the material plane, than most people realize, while on inner planes their power necessarily is a thousandfold more dynamic. Without any intervention of our will, the emotion of fear, or that of danger, leads to a physiologi-

cal revolution which profoundly affects every part of us; for the blood is hurriedly driven from all our internal organs, except the heart, lungs and brain, and dispatched to the muscles of our limbs and trunk; our stored-up reserves of starch are hurriedly converted into soluble sugar, with which the blood becomes charged; the blood itself becomes curiously modified, so that it more readily clots; the heart beats more quickly and strongly, and all feeling of fatigue disappears. Where is the drug, or where the surgeon's tool, that can in a minute effect such a miracle as this? But I cut out a review of a book by Dr. H. Roberts, entitled *Euthanasia and other Aspects of Life and Death*, published by Constable, and have it in my pocket. It is from this that I get my information, and will now read directly from what the author says:

> The series of automatic and immediate adaptations is by no means purposeless. It is exactly calculated to make efficient the essential self-preservation response to the fear-provoking situation in the primitive environment in which this machinery developed. Whether flight or fight were expedient, it is in the muscles that the blood would be needed; and, for the work which they would be called upon to do, they would need all the fuel they could get. The advantage of the increased coagulability of the blood in case of physical injury is obvious.
>
> All this takes place as a spontaneous consequence of an emotion. In the light of these facts, he would be rash who would set narrow limits to the possibilities of faith or any other emotion. The success of the old "charmers", who often caused such crude material objects as warts to disappear in a night, is a standing challenge to unimaginative "science". At the same time, all experience goes to suggest that there are limits to the capacity of the spontaneous and unconscious forces within us.
>
> It is not a question of distinction between visible structural changes and what are called functional disturbances. Nothing could be more visible than a wart; and those causes which can cause a rush of blood to the face when we blush, or to the muscles when we are afraid; which can increase the beat of the heart or cause it to stop; which can lead to enlargement or atrophy of important glands; can obviously play a very important part in the restoring of health and the healing of wounds.

"Translate that in terms of the psychic body, and see where you arrive! Above all, as the Ancient suggested, remembering that our fears, and a sense of danger, are impossible except as effects of an active imagination, let us try to realize what wonders could be effected if we were to use our imaginations deliberately, in order to arouse right instead of wrong or wasteful emotions: as he said, they would indeed lift us to the very gates of Paradise."

"We ought to be as careful of our imaginations as women used to be of their honour", commented the Philosopher; "for the imagination creates forms, and a form, thus created, draws to itself that Kamic force which we describe as an emotion or 'feeling', the intensity of which determines the life-cycle, long or short, of the form. All of us carry around with us an astral picture gallery of these living forms, which are vitalized further by every similar feeling we subsequently have, and which control to a large extent our after-death experience and our future incarnation. Further, this collection of mental pictures strongly affects the people with whom we come in contact, either for good or ill, so that responsibility for our 'mind-born sons' is far-reaching, both now and, Karmically, hereafter.

"I have avoided the use of the word 'desire', and have spoken, instead, of 'feeling', because horror, or that intense repulsion which is the opposite of desire, will vitalize a mental picture almost as strongly as will attraction to it. That is why we can be haunted for weeks, consciously, by some hideous sight, or by some vile thing of which we have read,—while the effect of the vitalized image will remain with us, perhaps unconsciously, for as long as we live, and longer. This is why control of our imagination—of the content of our aura—is of such immense importance. *After* an image has been created, much of the mischief has been done; we must learn to inhibit the least movement of our imagination, *ab initio*."

"This is interesting", remarked one of our visitors. "I wish you would give me some illustration of what you have just said."

"Suppose", was the reply, "that you are being driven in an automobile, and that a taxi-cab, 'against the lights', comes whirling round a corner. If you will watch your reactions closely (this illustration, by the way, is not original; it was used at a New York Branch meeting), you will find that you feel the worst of the nervous shock *after* the danger is over; then, perhaps, your heart will almost stand still. Examining yourself still more closely, you will find that your view of the on-rushing taxi was instantaneous; that your imagination had no time in which to 'get going' until the taxi had just missed you, and you had a free second in which to form a mental picture of what *might* have happened. It is this mental picture that gives you the shock. Put it to the test. You will undoubtedly have plenty of opportunities! The next time such a thing happens, jump on your imagination and throttle it with your will, the moment you see the taxi approaching; keep it stiff and cold for a minute or two after the danger has passed. You will not feel any shock. Then, for experimental purposes, relax your grip. Your imagination will give a sigh of relief, and in a flash you will feel what might have been, and the shock. That merely illustrates, of course, why, in other and far more important respects, we need to gain control over the *incipient* movements of our imagination."

"Your psychic picture gallery", the same visitor now objected, "sounds to me like a cross between Mme. Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors and Sinbad's Old Man of the Sea. Is there no way of escape?"

"*My* picture gallery!" the Philosopher laughed. "You are not flattering; because there is no need to assume that everybody's picture gallery is full of evil or horrible things; they may be full of very lovely and noble things: they ought to be. And at the worst—to answer your question—there is a way of escape; for if we have, figuratively speaking, painted pictures in the past which are not what they ought to be, we can paint new pictures over the old,—and, thank heaven, in that inner world the new pictures, if opposite in their nature to the old, will not only obliterate but will disintegrate our earlier work.

"But all that I have said so far was intended to serve primarily as an introduction to my theme, which is, that so much of modern literature obtrudes subjects, descriptions, incidents, which are grossly insulting to every woman reader, and which are revolting to every decent man,—matters of sex, handled

in a way that is coarse, and needlessly, wantonly brutal. Even perversions of sex are flung in one's face as if one lived on terms of intimacy with the most degraded and degrading aspects of what these writers falsely pretend is human nature. Time after time I have wanted to recommend some book to the readers of the QUARTERLY, having found that it contained much of interest or of value, and then have remembered some vile passage, or several of them, which I had resented bitterly, which had turned me completely against the author, and which made it impossible to pass on his book even to the men among my friends, while, as to the women among them, if I had done such a thing they could only have felt that I regarded them as so lacking in refinement, as so battered and benumbed morally, as so impervious where they ought to be most sensitive,—that their self-respect must have compelled them never to speak to me again. The right kind of woman, whether young or old (for age does not necessarily coarsen them, thank God), instinctively shrinks from the knowledge of evil, while her father, brothers, husband, if they be the right kind of men, consciously do their utmost to protect her from the taint which that knowledge inflicts. She knows inevitably, and ought to know, that there is evil in the world, and that sex is horribly misused in many ways; but her purity violently rejects the approach of any picture of such things, and she instantly turns from the materials, as it were, out of which such pictures are made. She will not allow herself to become contaminated; she values herself and her own soul far too highly. A married woman and perhaps the mother of a family, she is not innocent in the ordinary sense, but she is morally clean, she is pure, and, because she loves purity and reverences love, she hates impurity with all her womanhood, with all her heart, with all her strength.

"An author who writes a book of the kind to which I refer, implicitly damns his mother, his sisters, his wife, and all the other women of his acquaintance, for he assumes they will read his book with pleasure. In other words, he believes they are just as 'tough' as he is. And perhaps they are; but it is insulting to assume that they are; it is disloyal to announce publicly that they are,—which is what he does when he writes a book, avowedly for popular consumption, and to be read by women as well as by men, the contents of which violate every canon of good taste, and which cannot fail to disgust any woman of any class who has preserved some sense of delicacy in matters concerning sex."

"But is it not true that, 'To the pure, all things are pure'?" asked another of our visitors.

"It is not true", was the immediate response. "I know of few proverbs that are more misleading. To the pure, impure things are vile, and they are recognized at a glance, for the pure have preserved that 'sense' intact. A child of six is innocent rather than pure, and can read things, let us say in the Old Testament, without any understanding whatever. A child of that age is constantly reading things that are not understood. Once there is even a glimmer of comprehension, the same passages will be read, either with instinctive repulsion and immediate transfer of attention (the reaction of innate purity), or with curiosity and an effort to 'find out some more' (which is the reaction of innate

pruriency). In that case, the dictionary is consulted, the imagination is stimulated,—and you have the beginning of a psychic picture gallery of the worst kind, one result of which will soon be the desire to experiment, followed by moral perversion."

"But some women—women doctors, trained nurses, social workers and others—are compelled to give their attention to all kinds of evil, and in considerable detail. Would you condemn them as necessarily impure?"

"Of course not. A good woman may be cursed with a degenerate, depraved husband, and may yet preserve her purity. But at what cost, and with what dreadful suffering,—not only directly, but, as she will realize, from the inevitable soiling of her own mind. Remember that, as always, *it is the motive that counts*. Children need to be watched intelligently, and a mother *ought* to be alive to certain possibilities, a sufficient understanding of which should, if anything, tend to strengthen her love of purity and her loathing of sin. The performance of duty produces its own prophylactic. Further, a mother who has kept herself 'unspotted from the world', will refuse to know more than she actually needs to know for the right performance of her duty.

"Few more scathing things can be said of a girl than, 'There is nothing *she* doesn't know',—and the remark never is made except with disgust, even to-day, which suggests that at least a memory of the ideal persists.

"But leave women out of it entirely; my point is that even if novels, reminiscences, books of travel, and so forth, were written for men only, indecency leaves a trail of slime which is morally poisonous. In some cases it is introduced deliberately to supply 'spice' for the perverted appetites of readers; it 'sells the book': in other words, the publisher assumes the rôle of Pandarus,—and should be ostracized accordingly. Some day he will be—if the best in our civilization is to survive. There are authors, however, from whom this sort of thing flows spontaneously. A number of comparatively recent books by American and English newspaper correspondents, or by Secret Service agents, recounting their experience in Russia during the revolution—a subject in itself of real interest—are made odious by their parade of illicit sex 'adventures'. The same is true of certain current War books, otherwise admirable. All these are cases of downright indecency. There are authors, however, who do not parade their immoralities, and who may be innocent of them, but whose attitude toward such things makes it impossible to recommend their books, much as, in other respects, one would like to do so. For example: Rom Landau's *Seven*, the general tendency of which is religious and almost theosophical, drags its readers into the perverse filthiness of Berlin's night life during the inflationary period in Germany, and concludes, under this head: 'Berlin taught me broadmindedness in matters of sex'. What the author means by 'broadmindedness'—toleration of such hideous evils—is further revealed by his comment when travelling by train in Japan: 'I liked the lack of prudishness when at night men and women undressed in the Pullman car without doors or curtains, and behaved with a natural grace that our own absurd codes of shame have destroyed'. If a man's mother and sisters and wife refuse to undress in public,

and the man tells them that their refusal is not due to natural and proper modesty, but to an 'absurd code of shame',—that man, in my opinion, has been 'born too soon in human shape', and I am as certain as I live that Madame Blavatsky and Judge, both of whom were rigid in these matters, would agree. Not only are the most absolute moral integrity and purity essential in Occultism; they are fundamental in the theosophic life. In fact, refinement, delicacy of feeling, in matters of sex, and good taste in any reference to the subject, are supreme tests of a true as opposed to a perverted Theosophy. This, incidentally, is one of the directions in which Adyar has proved itself to have gone hopelessly astray.

"The more coarse the taste of to-day, the greater the obligation of Theosophists to uphold the higher and better standards of the past. We must come out into the open and protest, individually as well as collectively, against everything that is indecent and low in current literature.

"We shall be met, doubtless, with the statement—as a pretext for verbal licentiousness—that the Elizabethans and early Georgians were 'down-right and honest' in these respects, while the reticence of the Victorians was 'mealy-mouthed and hypocritical'. 'We', it will be said, 'prefer the former'. But the facts are that while the Elizabethans and early Georgians had many admirable qualities, and were superior to us in some ways, they were coarse in speech, which was a defect, not a virtue, and that the Victorians recognized this, and evolved to a higher level, leaving that defect behind them, just as they gradually left behind them the drunkenness which had been such a disgusting feature of fashionable life in earlier days. We are not obliged to imitate the worst in past ages; if imitate we must, let us imitate the best. Why pick from the civilization of Greece, for instance, whatever was depraved and debasing, and imitate that, instead of what was beautiful in her art and noble in her great dramatists? The answer is obvious: it is only the depraved who do so.

"Not long ago, the attention of a New York publisher was called to a particularly offensive passage in one of his books. His reply was: 'That passage sells the book'. On that basis, and in comparison, the liquor business must rank as elevating! But was the man right? The book in question was interesting and worth-while, except for some half-dozen pages, and perhaps would have sold at least as well without them as with them. Trash undoubtedly is sold on the strength of interspersed salaciousness. But think of those three volumes of reminiscences by Lord Frederic Hamilton—*The Vanished Pomps of Yesterday*, *The Days Before Yesterday*, and *Here, There, and Everywhere*—which have run into twenty-five or more editions, and are still in demand: there is not an unclean word or suggestion, direct or indirect, in one of them."

"He happened to be a gentleman", said the Ancient, dryly.

"With the inference that the dirt-mongers are nothing of the kind", the Philosopher added. "A fair inference,—and a fact. Universal education is responsible for much. Women, however, are among the worst offenders. I tried to read *Gone with the Wind*, simply because it is a 'best seller' of which over a million copies have been sold already—which means at least five million

readers—and I wanted to know what kind of book can interest the American public to that extent. It is not easy to speak of the result. It is one of the most revolting books I have ever read: it is *bad*. It is all the worse for being well and vividly written. The story centres in a woman who is morally rotten, and whose abominable feelings and motives are described in detail. The foul language of a drunkard is recorded with pornographic verisimilitude. Some of the Elizabethan dramatists were coarse enough, goodness knows; but they spared you the psychology of the thing; they did not drag you into the filth of the psychic substrata; they were not *bad*. In terms of art, the book presents an utterly false view of life. The only decent people in it are weaklings or dupes. To be able to read it with pleasure, implies either a moral void, or a secret craving for the worst forms of sensual stimulation. The harm done by such books is incalculable. The mind-images they create will fill the world with horrors,—for mind-images *must* spill over into this world in one form or another; sooner or later all of them will *incarnate* here."

"We certainly need a war", commented the Historian, "and a war that will shake both men and women to the depths; either a war or some frightful pestilence, that will bring every man and woman in the country face to face with death as an immediate, overwhelming probability."

"It makes it easier to understand why the Dark Powers are trying to divert our minds with Social Reform", said the Student, thoughtfully. "Personal ambition in high places falls an easy prey to the bait of popular approval, and to smother the real issue, the moral issue, the eternal issue, under a blanket of political claptrap in the guise of humanitarianism,—would undoubtedly be a clever move on the part of the powers of evil."

"What do you mean by the 'eternal issue'?" asked a visitor. "Is not justice the supreme issue always?"

"Yes; but God's Justice, not man's. The eternal issue is, whether the soul of man shall survive and finally triumph, or not. Moral corruption destroys the soul. If this nation is becoming morally degenerate and corrupt, it is in such terrible danger that, in comparison, nothing else matters. The Dark Powers, therefore, would do their utmost to divert attention from the spiritual and real danger, to issues which can be made to appear important and, if possible, 'ethical', but which actually are material, transitory, and of quite minor significance."

"Have the professional reviewers called attention to the immoralities of *Gone with the Wind*?" someone asked.

"So far as I am aware, No; but one thing most professional reviewers (like all ordinary people) really fear, is being ridiculed as prudish. Moral cowardice is an almost universal failing."

"I suspect that lack of self-confidence has much to do with it also", suggested the Ancient. "When 'all the world' praises, most people hesitate to condemn; they mistrust their better instincts; they are afraid to commit themselves. But this again, of course, is only another form of vanity,—a morbid fear of being mistaken. Probably, in the majority of cases, toleration of evil was ac-

quired—was indeed cultivated—one step at a time, until now the readers of such books have become indurated, callous. They began by telling themselves they must not be old-fashioned or puritanical, when some word or incident in a book offended them, and they gradually ceased to 'register' offence. They forget that in this as in all other directions, eternal vigilance is the price, not only of liberty, but of safety; for what often happens is, not induration so much as enjoyment of depravity by proxy; and that is pernicious: it kills the soul."

"The Student mentioned Lord Frederic Hamilton's reminiscences as having an immense sale", the Historian now said; "but we should not forget Kipling; he uses words occasionally which the Victorians would not have used—and I think they were right—but he was clean all the way through, and there is no author living whose books are in such world-wide and constant demand. When he *has* to refer to a nasty subject, he does it with decency. In his recently published *Something of Myself*, he mentions incidentally, and without any detail, the perversities so often met with in boys' schools, which were unheard of in his own, and says that, talking it over long afterwards with the Headmaster, the latter stated that 'his one prophylactic against certain unclean microbes was to send us to bed dead tired'. Imagine the pages of revolting incident and detail, and brutal language, into which the up-to-date author would have plunged, revelling, as he covered the same subject!"

"Why limit your criticism to books?" asked the same visitor. "The stage and the 'Movies' are often just as bad."

"I know they are, and I came prepared, to a limited extent, for that too"—whereupon the Philosopher produced a newspaper cutting. "At a hearing in Washington the other day, before the House Immigration Committee, the newspapers reported testimony that 'the American girl was the greatest "strip tease" artist of them all, and that "stripping" was a typically American art.' *The New York Times* added:

> "Strange as it may seem", Mr. Minsky told the committee, "these strip tease artists have to be trained and schooled. They have to be taught rhythm in a manner synchronous with the music. They are taught to strip and unclothe by specialists in the atmosphere and lighting of the stage."

"No need to comment on that, I imagine.

"But as I started this general subject, let me reply to your question about limiting criticism chiefly to books,—that not even for readers of the QUARTERLY am I prepared to spend an evening witnessing scenes such as I have just indicated, in a psychic atmosphere which would asphyxiate a goat. It is bad enough to feel obliged to look through a 'best seller' like the one I named: that is as far as I am prepared to go. If people *seek* salaciousness, they must have it,—and take the consequences. Warnings would be wasted, and might even whet an appetite already so far depraved."

"Now for the signs of promise", said the Recorder. "We know that behind the blackest sky, the sun still shines, and that often through chinks between clouds, we are reminded of its hidden radiance. It is vitally necessary to do what we can to prevent darkness being mistaken for light, coarse for 'honest'

speech, retrogression for progress; and we must fight to the end against the smug self-satisfaction which regards this age as the culmination of human achievement,—realizing, as we do so, that those who love the things of darkness will call us scolds, reactionaries, and kill-joys. Especially are we likely to hear this from the young people, for in some ways they are innocent,—though they would hate to be thought so. Youth necessarily lacks experience—not always of evil, alas, but certainly of its consequences—and is, therefore, all the more inclined to be cock-sure of itself. We must have patience with it; we were once like that ourselves! And there *is* a crying need for remonstrance, which we must off-set by pointing out that what we urge is reaction from evil, from debasement, to the heights of spiritual attainment,—to those magnificent possibilities which Theosophy, from the far past and throughout history, reveals as within man's compass, as offered for his conquest, even now, by the Divine compassion. It is because he might be so great, that man's defilement is so terrible.

"Perhaps I should lead off with what struck me as a favourable omen, and as a hint of little-suspected prevision and superintendence. I refer to the publication in the March *Scientific American* (of all places) of an article on "The Problem of the Holy Shroud" by a Professor of Biology who believes in its authenticity. On pages 148 and 162, there are reproductions of the form and face imprinted on the shroud, supposed to be that of Christ, which cannot fail to impress those older students of Theosophy who are familiar with other portraits of other Masters, and who will recognize the 'family' resemblance. The shroud has been in the custody of the House of Savoy since 1453, and was transferred from Chambéry to Turin in 1578. It was not photographed until 1898, when something of a sensation was caused by the discovery that the image on the linen was a negative, with lights and shadows inverted, which photography of course rectified. So far as I am aware, a negative image, in a photographic sense, was unknown in remote centuries; but apart from that, no one with any knowledge of Pre-Raphaelite art (and the authenticity of the portrait was discussed in 1389) could possibly believe that it was the work of an early painter. The wounded but majestic face is stamped with the effects of dreadful suffering—with all the grief and torture of the Passion. The negative image shows none of this. Why was it that the revelation of the face was made impracticable until 1898, and that only now has it been brought to popular attention in this country—for very few people in the English-speaking world can have so much as heard of the exhaustive monograph on the subject, in French, published in Paris in 1929, under the title, *Le Saint-Suaire de Turin*. Why *now?* And can the inherent inhibitions and their final removal have been foreseen at the time of Christ's death and burial? But I must refer you to the *Scientific American*, for, without seeing the photographs, it is not easy to appreciate the significance of the event. Students of Theosophy particularly should be interested, because they will realize that the precipitation of the image on the linen shroud could have been effected even without the chemical processes which explain it to the satisfaction of the author of the article.

"Now for other good omens."

"Omen or not", responded the Student, "an article by Roger W. Babson, the well-known statistician, in the March number of *The Commentator*, is most refreshing. More than that, it is a real ray of light in a distressingly dark world. His title is: 'Beware of the Boom!' He points out that the bigger the boom, the deeper the depression which always follows it. Plenty of people are saying *that;* but listen to this:

> We are the dictators of our own destiny. Our destiny, however, whether happiness or misery, must be evolved in accordance with fundamental principles. If the coming period is to be anything sounder than a "rake's progress", business must not sheer away from the line of normal growth. We are squarely set for a boom and there is but one protection against its becoming unwieldy—and that is *a spiritual revival.* The sure safeguard against degeneration is regeneration—that alone. I believe there is a fair chance that this may come. Therefore I continue to be optimistic. . . .
>
> It is easy to understand why it is hard to guard against a boom. The seeds of the recklessness and greed that breed booms are not strewn from without. They germinate within the human mind. *Only as the hearts of our people are cleansed of evil can we hope to avoid falling into evil.* A permanent economic revival depends upon an immediate spiritual revival. Furthermore, let me add that I believe this may be in the cards.

"My emphasis, which the Recorder will please reproduce in italics, is not in the original; but the entire article is on those lines. Could anything be more satisfactory in a secular magazine? By the way, other articles in the same issue of *The Commentator*, on 'The Labour Lobby', by George Sokolsky, and 'Russia—A Government of Gunmen', by Joseph Shaplen, also are promising signs, and deserve wide attention."

The Recorder now asked the Historian what he could contribute under this head.

"I find considerable comfort in the way England has been behaving", the Historian replied. "She stood the test of Edward's abdication wonderfully, as everyone recognizes, and gained strength of purpose and clearer vision from that moral victory. Almost at once there was a subsidence of Pacifism. On Christmas Eve, the London *Times*, in an editorial entitled 'Peace on Earth', struck the key-note of much that has happened since. I will read you the few sentences which give the substance of it:

> If Christ applauded the man who did not resist injury done to himself, He never commended those who stood by in passive acquiescence while injury was done to others. He praised a soldier's faith with no hint that his was an unworthy calling. Pacifist doctrine, when translated from generalities into concrete terms, requires us to believe that European nations were wrong when they used force to resist the Moslem invasion, and that fidelity to the teaching of Christ would have been best shown by permitting the unresisted extermination of Christianity.

"Shortly afterwards, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in an address to his diocesan conference, declared: 'The use of force by the State was the ministry of God for the protection of the people. (Cheers.) If that were true of the State in its domestic relations, it was equally true for the State in its international relations. It all depended on the motive or intention with which it was used.'

"Still later, on February 5th, the Bishop of London protested that 'the real dangers to the peace of the world to-day are pacifists. If we had taken the views of pacifists in 1914, either the German Emperor or Hitler would now be in Whitehall. The German plan was first to swallow France and then to go on to Great Britain.' He added: 'I should have thought that Ethiopia would have cured every pacifist in the world.'

[American pacifists will please note.—EDITORS.]

"Then came the huge credit voted by Parliament for national re-armament.

"I see in all of this, both a return to right principles, and a new willingness to face the facts. England is no longer shutting her eyes and living on vain hopes. England, so to speak, has gone back to work. May not a corresponding change of heart take place here?"

"Well", said the Philosopher, "miracles still happen. I, for one, should not be alive to-day—in any case should not be spiritually alive—if it were not for a prolonged series of miracles, to which I have not been in the least entitled. So it is not for me to question the possibility of a miraculous change in the situation here. Members of The Theosophical Society can in any case do their utmost, from day to day, to make divine intervention possible. Faith will move mountains. Everywhere there are well-intentioned people, as well as people who, like Babson, realize that a spiritual revival would save us; but there are very few who, with that degree of understanding, have the faith and *will* which call down from heaven the passionate sympathy of the Just,—of those 'just men made perfect' whose will is God's will, and who, therefore, are creators in their own right,—not 'out of nothing', true, but out of the sacrifices offered them by the unselfish, trusting, aspiring hearts of otherwise ordinary men. If there were enough of these—not many, but enough—our nation, now destroying itself, might be turned from its greed and pruriency, vulgarity and self-satisfaction, to the ideals of George Washington, which we were intended to follow, and infidelity to which is the cause of all our troubles."

T.

Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair; the rest is in the hands of God.—GEORGE WASHINGTON.

THE BEATRICE OF DANTE

FROM A THEOSOPHIC POINT OF VIEW[1]

ONE of the most interesting things in the history of intellectual development, is to note the manner in which certain ideas crop up here and there in different ages and different countries, seemingly without connection, and yet bearing the marks of unmistakable family likeness. And as the summits of the highest mountains resemble each other closely, and in all countries the towering pinnacles of snow and ice catch the first gleams of sunrise upon their dazzling brows, and glow with the rose of sunset long after the lower world is dark, so it is with the greatest minds. They rise above the general level of the race, to receive the first glimpses of the eternal light, and in all countries and all ages, Wisdom is their common portion. Especially is this to be noted of the seers of the world, of those who use their spiritual *in*sight rather than their intellectual *out*sight, and of these was Dante—as he himself said of Aristotle—"master of those who know". Dante is said to have belonged to the Order of the Templars, to that body of men acknowledged by all to have been reared in the utmost refinement and culture of the day, men imbued, through their travels and residence in the East, with much of its mystic learning and hidden secrets. The religion of the Templars has long been known to have been no tissue of childish absurdities and superstitious practices, but to have represented that advanced thought which in an age of persecution it was most necessary to conceal. Rightly considered, says Wilcke (the great German authority on the subject), their secret doctrine was nothing more than Protestantism in general and rationalism in particular. But we are told that *the Temple* signified the Wisdom-religion, handed down in secret from remote antiquity, and even Ozanam, the principal Roman Catholic writer upon Dante, declares

[1] This article by Miss Katharine Hillard is reprinted from *Lucifer*, of August 15th and September 15th, 1891. It had been read by the author, prior to its publication, before the Aryan T. S. of New York.
Miss Hillard, who died in November, 1915, was an old and greatly valued member of The Theosophical Society. She was a distinguished Dante scholar. Her translation of the *Il Convito* into English (Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., London, 1889), is still recognized as perhaps the best. Member of a prominent Brooklyn family (Mr. Seth Low, at one time President of Columbia University, later, a "reform" Mayor of New York, was her cousin), she lived for years in Italy; met Madame Blavatsky in London in 1887; returned to the United States; became a devoted admirer of Mr. Judge, and did everything in her power to assist him in his work, continuing her loyal and active membership in the Society to the day of her death.—EDITORS.

that the plan of the *Divine Comedy* closely follows the outlines of an initiation into the Egyptian mysteries.

However this may be, it is at least true, as Ozanam says further, that "mystics, by a certain divine intuition which they had no leisure to verify, often had a presentiment of certain natural laws whose complete revelation was reserved for subsequent ages. . . . In mysticism a great power was given to the heart over the mind, and the imagination held the keys of the heart; thence a real need, a constant habit, of allegorical expressions and legendary allusions. Contemplative, ascetic, symbolical, such has mysticism ever been, and it has left its triple seal upon the philosophy of Dante."

Science has found in that philosophy, the germ of many of the most modern ideas in physiology, more than a hint of the laws of gravity and attraction, a foreknowledge of a western continent, and a theory of morals far in advance of Dante's age. He was accused of heresy many times, as a Ghibelline and a Templar, both before and after his death, and Cardinal del Poggetto was with difficulty restrained from exhuming his lately buried remains and having them publicly burned as those of a heretic.

Many authors, English, French, Italian, have held similar views as to Dante's secret connection with the Templars, and about 1835, Vecchioni, President of the Supreme Court of Naples, tried in vain to be allowed to publish a book on the *Divine Comedy* in which he proposed to show that a treasure of primitive wisdom had been handed down by the Egyptian priests who transmitted its secrets to the initiated alone, by means of a secret language; that this language passed with the mysteries into Greece, was employed by the early poets, and then adopted by the philosophers, especially by Plato; from Greece it was transmitted to Italy, and handed down to the time of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, who used it in their works; and finally, that the *Divine Comedy* was arranged after the plan of a *Taletes*, or initiation to the mysteries, ending in the *Eposis* or vision of the Divine. This secret language, or rather conventional use of language, was taught by *grammarians*, *Grammar* being the first of the seven mystic sciences known as the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*, and defined as *the art of expressing a thing with two meanings.*

I have no time to go into the history of heresy in the Middle Ages, but it is a significant fact, that *Catharism*, generally identified with the religion of the Templars, is said to be derived, not from a Greek, but from an Indian word, the name of a river and of a people. The Brahminical white thread was used as a girdle by both Catharists and Templars.

Loiseleur, the great French authority on the Templars, says that they believed in a Divine Spirit, as opposed to the organizer of matter and the creator and preserver of the world, and that they were closely connected with the sect of the *Enchetes* or worshippers of Lucifer. Here we recognize the old opposition of Spirit and Matter, and the dawning recognition of the formula *Demon est Deus inversus*. Heckethorn, in his *Secret Societies of All Ages*, speaking of the Catharists, says that in their chivalric orders, the degrees, at first three, afterwards became seven, and at the time of their presumed fusion with the Albi-

genses, the Templars, and the Ghibellines, thirty-three. We *know*, at least, that Dante was a Ghibelline, and thirty-three, the number of the degrees in Masonry, is the number upon which he bases the structure of the *Divine Comedy*. "The statutes of the Catharists closely resembled those of the Templars", continues Heckethorn, "and their clothes were of the same three colours with those of Beatrice, and the three circles in Paradise", *i.e.*, red, white and green, the colours of the Trinity.

The idol Baphomet, that the Templars were accused of worshipping, represented the head of an old man with a flowing white beard, undoubtedly identical with the *Ancient of Days* or the *White Head* of the Kabbala, a symbol of the Deity. The name signifies the *baptism of wisdom*, and corresponds to the *Abraxas* of the Gnostics, often represented under the same figure, surrounded by four stars, and beheld as the sun. Dante uses *Cato* in the *Banquet* (iv, 28) as a symbol of the Deity, and describes him in the *Purgatory* (c, I) as an old man with a long white beard, surrounded by the four consecrated stars, which shone so brightly upon his face that the poet beheld him as the sun.

One of Dante's French critics speaks of the Pagan characteristics of the *Inferno;* of the many occult elements of the *Purgatorio*, where we have all the tests of initiation, both ancient and modern; of the many heretics and heathen in the *Paradiso*; of the fact that Virgil and Statius, Dante's guides, are both pagans, and that St. Bernard, to whom is given the part of third hierophant, or high priest, was the compiler of the rules of the Templars.

Many authors, as I have said before, have pointed out the resemblance between the course of the *Divine Comedy* and the old initiations, but we must not forget that, while to the profane these mysteries represented the story of a hero's descent into hell and subsequent ascension into heaven, and, to the scientist, the progress of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac, to the more enlightened they typified the regeneration of the soul. The Masonic initiation for instance, exoterically represents the murder and resurrection of Hiram, the architect of Solomon's Temple, and the assassins slay him at the *west* door, because the sun sets in the west. They are twelve in number, to correspond with the signs of the Zodiac, and they bury the body and mark the spot with a sprig of acacia (emblem of immortality) to typify the new vegetation to follow the sun's resurrection. The body of Hiram is discovered on the seventh day, to symbolize the renewed life of the sun in the seventh month, and can only be brought to life by "the lion's grip", because the sun's full strength is attained when he enters *Leo* (July).

This is the astronomical key, but we are told that to all significant myths, the keys are *seven*. We are also told that the building of Solomon's Temple typified the acquirement of the Secret Wisdom, and that this is why it is said to have been reared without sound of hammer or axe. All initiations follow the same general lines. Beginning with the death of *the old man*, they symbolize re-birth, accompanied by the baptism of Lethe, or the forgetfulness of evil, and Eunoë, or the reception of good, followed by resurrection, or ascension to the higher life. The neophyte's entrance to the new life is almost always made

through a narrow crevice, from which the initiate emerges, as from the gates of birth. Such passages still exist in the old crypts of many cathedrals, as well as in the Great Pyramid, and when Dante leaves Hell, he emerges through a *narrow crevice* in the rock, from which he first beholds the stars.

The Freemasons of to-day proudly claim descent from the Templars, and there are many singular coincidences in Dante's poem with portions of the Masonic symbolism. It would take too long to go through the whole story of the regeneration of the soul, which Dante himself tells us to be his subject, its *mystical* sense; "the passage of the holy from the slavery of present corruption to the liberty of the eternal glory". Some of the most striking resemblances, however, are found in the description of the gate of Purgatory, led up to by three steps, at whose top stands an angelic warder with a naked sword, to demand of the poet who he is, and where is his escort. In fact, the whole description of his passage through the seven circles of Purgatory, with its two baptisms, and the vision of the glorified Beatrice, or Divine Wisdom, at the end, corresponds most closely, as has been said, to the old *Taletes*. So in the *Paradiso*, with its voyage from star to star, there are many symbols recalling the Masonic temple with its starry roof. Reghellini (who wrote a book on *Masonry as the result of the Egyptian religions*) was so impressed by these resemblances, that he declared Dante an initiate of the Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian orders. King, in his book on *The Gnostics and their Remains*, says that the 18th canto of the *Purgatory* is "replete with the profoundest symbolism, which the Freemasons claim for their own". To confirm these statements, it is enough to speak of Dante's use of such symbols as the imperial eagle, the mystic ladder, the rose and cross, the pelican, the supper of the Lamb, the three pillars of Faith, Hope, and Charity; of symbolic colours, letters, and geometric figures—the point, the circle, the triangle, the square; the trampling of crown and mitre under foot by the neophyte; the invoking of Divine vengeance on the destroyers of the Temple; the choice of St. Bernard, organizer of that Order, as High Priest.

To all these coincidences in the *Divine Comedy*, the other works of Dante's great trilogy, the *Vita Nuova* (or *New Life*), and the *Convito* (or *Banquet*), supply even more ample confirmation, and it seems to me strange that any one familiar with the character of the man, his age, and his studies, could fail to see the mystical element to be the uppermost in all. Lest this should be missed in the *New Life*, in spite of his efforts to make it plain, Dante wrote the *Banquet*, a philosophical work in prose, especially intended to explain and corroborate his other works; and he also wrote to Can Grande a much-neglected letter about the *Divine Comedy*, in which he tells him that this book, like all other books, can be understood, and ought to be interpreted, in four ways, the *literal*, the *allegorical*, the *moral*, and the *mystical;* and moreover he is careful to inform us that the *literal* is not necessarily the historical, but may be only "a beautiful fiction".

The *Vita Nuova*, or story of Dante's *New Life*, has been too much studied from the *historical* point of view, and the Beatrice of that "beautiful fiction" considered as a real person. Of course, there is no time to go fully into this much-vexed question; suffice it to say that we know that a Beatrice Portinari

existed, but we have only the authority of Boccaccio for her identification with the Beatrice of Dante, who nowhere names any family or any place in his book; and that Boccaccio is an exceedingly untrustworthy chronicler, all his dates (which are very few) being at variance, either with Dante's, or with history, while all Dante's dates in the *Vita Nuova* are mystical combinations of the number 9. The usual number of degrees in the secret societies is 33, the number Dante uses in the *Divine Comedy*. In the mediæval associations at least, these degrees were denoted by a series of odd numbers, and when the man was *born again* and rose to the *new life*, these numbers were called years. The third degree, for instance, was called the 9th year. Dante's story of his *New Life* describes his meeting Beatrice (the "giver of blessings") for the first time when he was *nine* years old, and though he *sees* her often after that, it is nine years before their second meeting, when for the first time he *hears her speak*. Now in the third degree, the neophyte (then said to be *nine years old*) "beholds the light", symbolized by a fair woman, with whom he is said to fall in love. "Beholding the light" consisted in *seeing* the sacred symbols and *hearing* them explained. The two mystic baptisms of Lethe and Eunoë signified *purification*, or death to sin, and *manifestation*, or rebirth in purity. Manifestation was performed in two ways,—by showing the symbols to the neophyte, and by explaining their meaning to him, and was therefore the same process as "beholding the light", or "falling in love with Madonna". This ocular inspection and oral instruction were called "the eyes and mouth" (or smile) of Madonna, and constituted her *first* and *second beauty*.

In his *New Life*, as I have just said, Dante at the age of nine, *sees* Beatrice, and nine years later, *hears* her speak. And when he meets her in Purgatory, after her death, she wears a veil, through which he can only see her glorious *eyes*, and then she throws it off, and he discovers her *second beauty*, her smile, "the splendour of the living Light Eternal". "Not in mine eyes alone is Paradise", says Beatrice to him, further on.

In the *Banquet*, Dante explains that by the *eyes* of his lady he means the demonstrations of Wisdom, and by her *second beauty*, her smile, that intuitive conviction whereby we perceive Wisdom as without any veil.

Such mystical dates as Dante uses all through the *New Life* occur in almost all the writings of the mediæval poets, and these coincidences, if they are nothing more, are very striking. The Holy Week is almost always made the turning-point of their lives and of their loves. As Dante chooses it for the time of the *Commedia*, so Boccaccio takes it for the *Decameron*, and dates his mystical work *Filocopo* on Holy Saturday. He first meets his Fiammetta "in a temple", on Holy Saturday, while Petrarch meets Laura "in a temple" on Good Friday, at "the first hour of the day"; she is born on Good Friday, and she dies on Good Friday, "at the first hour of the day". Camoëns, and several of the Troubadour poets, describe themselves as falling in love on Good Friday, and their ladies, like Laura, all die on Good Friday, many of them, like Laura and Beatrice, "at the first hour of the day". The degree already described as "beholding the light" or "falling in love with Madonna", was given at "the first hour of the day", and

when the light was withdrawn again, in the last degree, it was said to disappear, or "Madonna died", at "the first hour of the day".

Dante then begins the story of his *New Life* by saying that he was nine years old when first the glorious lady of his mind appeared before his eyes, even she who was called Beatrice (the giver of blessing) by many who did not know it to be her name. She was not quite nine, and when he saw her, the spirit of life, which hath its dwelling in the secretest chamber of the heart, trembled violently, and said to him (in Latin): "Here is a deity stronger than I, who, coming, shall rule over me". And the animal soul, dwelling in the lofty chamber whither all the sensitive spirits carry their perceptions, was filled with wonder, and speaking more especially unto the spirits of vision, said: "Your *beatitude* hath now been made manifest unto you. . . . And Love many times commanded me to go in search of this very young little angel", continued Dante, "wherefore many times in my childhood did I go in search of her, and saw her to be of such noble and praiseworthy bearing, that certainly to her might be applied these words of the poet Homer, 'She seemed not the daughter of mortal man, but of God'."

Nevertheless, it was nine years to a day after their first meeting before Dante ever heard her speak, and then she only saluted him as she passed him in the street. It is after this second meeting that the poet's love makes such havoc with his bodily health, that his friends, noting his weakness, ask him: "By whose help has Love done this?" "I looked in their faces smiling", says Dante, "and spake no word in return". And then, seeing Beatrice across a church one day, he notices a gentle lady midway between them, and makes, in his pretended devotion to her, a "screen" for his love to Beatrice, by this means keeping his secret for some months and years. Now the love of a boy of 18 or 20, whose only demonstration had been one salutation to his lady in the street, scarcely needed such concealment, and yet when this lady left the city, Love named to him another "screen", and this second pretended devotion was so well enacted that people gossiped of it, and accused him of vicious conduct, so that when next Beatrice met him, she denied him her most sweet salutation, in which lay all his beatitude.

Passing over his glimpse of Beatrice at a wedding (where none but married ladies were wont to go) and the account of the death of her father (the only realistic incident in the book), we come to Dante's mention of his severe illness, on the ninth day of which he has a vision of Beatrice as dead, in many respects like the vision of her in *Purgatory*. Following this dream, comes his description of his last meeting with Beatrice in life, as she passes by him preceded by that lady Joan, whom he compares to St. John, going before the True Light, saying, "I am a voice crying in the desert: prepare ye the way of the Lord". And then Dante declares that Beatrice should be called *Love*.

The narrative of the *New Life* abruptly breaks off soon after this, with the news of the passing away of Beatrice, which news comes to Dante as he is writing a sonnet in her praise. "This happened", he says, "at the *first hour* of the *ninth* day of the *ninth* month (according to Syrian reckoning) of that year

of the thirteenth century in which the perfect number (*ten*) was *nine* times completed." And one reason why *nine* plays so conspicuous a part in her history, he tells us, is, that all the nine heavens were in the most perfect harmony at her birth, but "the more subtle and infallibly *true* reason is, that she was a miracle whose *sole root* was the blessed Trinity".

At this point the story of the *Banquet* comes in (as Dante said he intended that it should) to help out and corroborate the *New Life*. In both books the idea is the same, and it is a curious fact that neither in them nor in the *Divine Comedy* (except once where the rhyme necessitates it) does the poet ever use the word death in connection with Beatrice. Two years after she had been made "a citizen of the Eternal Life", Dante says in the *Vita Nuova*, he first beheld at a window a gentle lady, who so comforted him with her pitying glances, that he thought of her with too much pleasure. By this gentle lady, he tells us in the *Banquet*, he meant Scholastic Philosophy, and for the next two years and a half he devoted himself to this branch of learning.

But in spite of its attractions, and those of the active life of soldier and statesman that soon followed, the love of his first ideal was still latent in the soul of the poet, and as the *Banquet* proceeds, Dante shows us how far beyond all science and all morality is the Divine Philosophy or Eternal Wisdom, which is full of all peace, and whose dwelling-place is that *Quiet Heaven* where the soul is at rest with the Supreme. So at the end of the *New Life* he has a vision, about the *ninth* hour, of the glorified Beatrice, clothed in that sanguine raiment in which she first appeared to him, and seeming as young as when he first saw her. And remembering the past, he grieves to think that he has ever been led aside by any other love, and all his thoughts return to centre upon their first beatitude. And he has another vision of Beatrice receiving homage "beyond that sphere of widest range", the *Primum Mobile;* that is, within the Quiet Heaven of Divine Wisdom and Peace. And after that other vision embodied in the *Divine Comedy*, he resolves to say no more of this blessed one till he can more worthily treat of her.

When Dante next meets Beatrice, on the summit of the Mount of Purgatory (in that terrestrial Paradise, explained by the Fathers of the Church to mean the contemplative life), she says to him with keen irony, "How didst thou deign (being lost in the pride of learning) to come unto this Mount?" And turning to her attendant Virtues, she continues: "Not only by the influence of the stars at his birth did this man receive great intellectual power, but also by special gift of Divine grace did he become such in his new life that everything good was possible to him. I revealed myself to him in his youth, and for some time led him with me in the right way, but . . . as I ascended from flesh to spirit, and beauty and virtue increased in me, I became less dear to him, and he turned to pursue those false images of good that never fulfil their promises. . . . The law of justice would be violated, should he pass Lethe without tears and repentance." And when he has repented, confessed, and undergone the double baptism of water and fire, Beatrice leads the poet upward from heaven to heaven, until St. Bernard guides him to the final Vision of the Divine.

In the *New Life*, the *Banquet*, and the *Divine Comedy*, the descriptions of Beatrice are almost identical with those of *Wisdom* in the various books of the Bible and the Apocrypha, which Dante was so fond of quoting, and he identifies Beatrice continually with Love, with Wisdom, and therefore with the Logos. In the *New Life* he declares her to be identical with *Love*, and in the *Banquet* he writes: "Wherefore it is written of this eternal Love *which is Wisdom*, 'He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail' (Eccles. xxiv, 9). And in the Proverbs of Solomon (viii, 23) she, Wisdom, says, 'I was set up from everlasting'. And in the beginning of the Gospel of John her eternity is openly declared."

From these and many other passages quoted or assimilated by Dante, we see the deep hold that the Gnostic ideas had taken upon his mind, and the close resemblance that his *Wisdom* (here and in many other places identified with the Logos and the Second Person of the Trinity) bears to that spiritual intuition, or secret Knowledge of Divine things, common to mystics of all ages. The highest Good, beyond which there is nothing to aspire to, Dante tells us, is that blessedness (or beatitude) which follows the exercise of the soul in contemplation[2]. He has a vision of this beatitude as a child, he loses it for awhile in the busy whirl of the active life, the pursuits of the world, the cares of the state and the family, the duties of the soldier, the studies of the poet, the artist, the musician, and the scientist (for the many-sided Dante was all these), but at last the vision of the higher life, as he had seen it when a boy, came back to him, and he returned to the love of Divine Wisdom, that "splendour of the living Light Eternal".

"And thus it appears", says Dante, in the *Banquet*, "that our beatitude, that is, this felicity of which we are speaking, we may first find imperfectly in the active life, that is, in the exercise of the moral virtues, and then almost perfectly in the contemplative life, that is, in the exercise of the intellectual virtues; which two operations are unimpeded and most direct ways to lead us to the supreme beatitude that cannot be obtained here below."

The schoolmen of Dante's time, who based their philosophical speculations upon the system of Aristotle, defined the intellect as the capability of receiving abstract ideas, the *possibility* of understanding, in short, and therefore this was called the "*possible intellect*". It was compared to a mirror, and ideas to the reflections therein, and Aristotle was the first to recognize that as this faculty bore the same relation to pure conceptions that the sense of sight does to visible things, it was necessary to admit also the existence of an active principle which should stand to this in the relation of light to the sense of vision. This principle Aristotle called the "*Active Intelligence*", and in the union of this with the *Possible Intellect*, is consummated, he said, the act of pure comprehension. This Active Intelligence is universal, immortal, perpetual; "the intellectual life through her is the greatest beatitude to which man can aspire; indeed, it marks him more than man, divine". So that Dante was following his master closely when he wrote: "In every noble soul is its own virtue, and the intellectual and

[2] Identical with the "Concentration" of Patanjali.—AUTHOR.

the divine", and again in the *Banquet*, when he speaks of *mind* as "that culminating and most precious part of the soul, which is Deity" (*Banquet*, iii, 3).

Dante, then, in identifying Beatrice with the Logos, with "that eternal Love which is Wisdom", identifies her with that principle that Theosophists would call *Buddhi*, or Spiritual Wisdom, the vehicle by which the Supreme (or *Atma*) enters into and illuminates the mind of man. For to Dante, who followed closely the system of Aristotle, ideas corresponded to things seen; the intellect to the sense of sight; and the intelligence or intuition ("that most precious part of the soul which is Deity") to the light by whose aid alone the sense of sight can perceive visible things. "In every noble soul is its own virtue, and the intellectual, and the divine", and so (while realizing that all such divisions are but varying aspects of the Consciousness, not different entities), Dante divides the soul into *life*, which is one in all things (corresponding to *Prana*); into *feeling*, which includes desire and passion (corresponding to *Kama*); and into *reason* (or *Manas*) which he divides into the higher and lower, the imaginative and creative, and the reasoning or logical faculties. "And thus", he says, "the soul partakes of the Divine nature in the form of sempiternal Intelligence" (which we should call *Buddhi*), "because the soul, by virtue of this sovereign power, is so ennobled and set free from matter, that the Divine Light, as in the angels, can shine through her". "And this Divine Wisdom", says Dante, quoting from the *Book of the Wisdom of Solomon*, "is the brightness of the Everlasting Light (or *Atma*), the unspotted mirror of the majesty of God".

There could scarcely be a closer parallel with the theosophic ideas than this, and many more such passages could be cited, both from Dante's prose and his poetry. No less significant is that chapter of the *Banquet* (iv, 21) wherein he explains the conditions necessary to growth in spiritual knowledge as they have been so often explained to us, the absoluteness of the law that when the vessel is ready, it will be filled, and that if some are made to honour and some to dishonour, as St. Paul says, it is because they have made themselves fit for such various use. If a man purify his soul, "he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. ii, 21).

"And if it happen", says Dante, "that by the purity of the receiving soul the intellectual virtue be absolutely separate and free from any corporeal shadow, then the Divine goodness multiplies in that soul, as in a thing worthy to receive it; and further, it multiplies in the soul endowed with this intelligence *according to her capacity of reception*. . . . And some are of opinion that if all these powers should co-operate in the production of a soul according to their most favourable disposition, the Deity would descend upon that soul in such fulness that it would be almost another God incarnate" (*Banquet*, iv, 21).

Not all the poetry and philosophy of mysticism embodied in Dante's *New Life*, however, were sufficient to convince the world at large that it was the history of a *soul* that he was writing, and not that of a lover, and so in the *Banquet* (begun even before the *New Life* was finished, and left uncompleted at the poet's death), he tried to be even more explicit. In the first part he declares

his object in writing the *Banquet* to be twofold; firstly, to set forth certain teachings which he could give in no other way; and secondly, to clear himself from the infamy of being held subject to such passion as those who read his *Canzoni* (lyrics) might consider to possess him, whereas not *passion* but *virtue* was their moving cause. "And I say that Love held discourse within my *mind*, that it might be understood that this Love was born of the noblest part of our nature, that is, of Truth and Virtue, and also to exclude any false opinion of me, by which my love might be suspected of being a sensuous delight". . . . "By my lady", he says again, "I always mean that Philosophy treated of in the preceding *Canzone*"—that is, Philosophy identified there with Wisdom, "which exists above all in God, because in Him is supreme Wisdom, and supreme Love, and supreme Power, which cannot exist elsewhere, except as it proceeds from Him. Therefore the Divine Philosophy is of the Divine Essence, because in Him can be nothing added to His Essence; and she is most noble, because the Divine Essence is most noble: and she exists in Him perfectly and truly, as it were by eternal wedlock."

Therefore I think, we may conclude, from Dante's own words, that his Beatrice was the light of Divine Wisdom first made manifest to him in his youth, then for a time obscured by the shadows of the world, to shine out more clearly than ever as he neared the end of his mortal pilgrimage. He spent the last nineteen years of his life in loneliness and exile, occupied with his greatest work, the *Divine Comedy*, and writing at the same time the *Banquet*, a prose exposition of his philosophy, full of hints as to the hidden meaning of his symbolism, so often and so grossly misunderstood. To a man whose thoughts continually soared above the earthly plane, whose very features bore such marks of profound study and profound sorrow, that the Florentine women pointed at him as he passed, and said: "There goes the man who has seen Hell"; to a regenerated soul who had chosen the contemplative life as his beatitude, what need was there of earthly ties? There is no occasion, I think, to stigmatize the wife of Dante as unworthy of him, because he did not send for her to join him in his exile: he had become a wandering ghost, wrapped in visions of another world, long before his body was laid to rest in the ancient city of Ravenna.

"And since God is the source of our soul", says the great poet and seer in his last work, "and has made it like unto Himself, therefore this soul desires above all things to return to Him. . . . And because her knowledge is imperfect, because she has neither experience nor learning, things of little value seem great to her, and therefore she begins by first desiring them. . . . Wherefore we may see that one desirable thing stands before the next one to the eyes of the soul, almost like a pyramid; for at first the smallest thing hides all the rest, and is, as it were, the point of the ultimate subject of desire, which is God, standing at the base of all" (*Banquet*, iv, 12).

"Therefore" (says Dante again, in his book on the *Monarchy*) "the ineffable Providence of God proposes to man two aims; the one the beatitude of this life, which consists in the operation of his peculiar faculties, and is represented by the terrestrial paradise: the other the beatitude of the eternal life, which con-

sists in the fruition of the Divine aspect, to which human goodness cannot ascend if not aided by the Divine light, and this is what is meant by the celestial paradise. To these two beatitudes, as to diverse conclusions, we must arrive by different ways." And again, in the *Paradiso:*

All natures, by their destinies diverse,
Tend more or less close to their origin;
Hence they move onward unto different ports
O'er the great sea of being; and each one
With instinct given it, which bears it on.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

I have aforetime seen at the opening day, the eastern sky all rosy red, and the other parts of the heavens adorned with a beautiful serenity, and the face of the sun rise shadowed, so that, tempered by mist, the eye for long could endure it.

Thus in a cloud of flowers, which arose from angelic hands, and showered down again within and without, a Lady appeared to me, crowned with olive over a veil of snowy white, and, under a green mantle, clad in hue of living flame.

And my spirit, now that so long a time had passed, was not, though trembling, broken down by awe in her presence; and, without having further knowledge of her with my eyes, through some occult virtue that went out from her, felt the great potency of the ancient love.

As soon as smote upon my sight that high virtue which already had transfixed me while I was as yet a boy, I turned me to the left with the confidence of a little child who runs to his mother when he is afraid or when in trouble, to say to Virgil: Less than a drop of blood is left in me that does not tremble; I know the token of the ancient flame.—DANTE (*Purgatorio* XXX).

REVIEWS

New Bible Evidence, by Sir Charles Marston, F.S.A.; Fleming H. Revell Co., New York; price, $2.00.

In reading this book, we are once more impressed by the immense amount of light thrown, by means of archæological research, upon what have long been considered very hazy and questionable traditions. In some of the so-called critical methods of the past few generations, there has been a marked tendency to discredit many of the ancient records which have been preserved and which have come down to us; to relegate them, rather contemptuously, to the realm of "fairy tales"—as though "even fairy tales" had no foundation in truth! By means of very painstaking investigation, comparison and analysis, Sir Charles Marston, long known to us in connection with excavations in Palestine in company with Professor Garstang, has given us striking proof of the reality of certain events referred to in the Bible—events, the actual occurrence of which has been under dispute—and his conclusions are based on very convincing archæological data known but recently. Professor Garstang, for many years in charge of the excavations at Jericho and other ancient cities, has discovered, after careful and systematic work, much testimony as to the correct chronology of the Old Testament from the Exodus onward, and as a result of pottery-dating (the modern archæological method), has been able to establish the true date of the conquest of Jericho by Joshua. He places it more than two centuries earlier than has hitherto been supposed.

This readjustment of dates—throwing backwards by two hundred and twenty odd years many of the former calculations—does not, however, affect Palestine and its history only. It has re-staged, as it were, one of the oldest of historical and archæological mysteries. The date of the Exodus has long been a matter of dispute, and until very recently it was generally placed in the XIXth Dynasty, Rameses II being thought the Pharaoh of the Oppression, with Merneptah, a weaker follower, as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. But where, then, was the all-powerful "daughter of Pharaoh" who found the infant Moses in the bulrushes, and who befriended him throughout so many troublous years? There is no known woman of the XIXth Dynasty who would seem capable of having assumed this prominent rôle. Now, however, with this revision of dates on thoroughly sound, archæological evidence, we find ourselves moving in the great XVIIIth Dynasty, with Thothmes III as the Pharaoh of the Op-

pression, his successor Amenhotep II, as the Pharaoh who (after a prolonged struggle with Jehovah) finally let the Children of Israel go, and the gifted and imperious Princess Hatshepsut, direct descendant of the old Theban royal line which gave her a unique right to the throne, as the long-sought "Pharaoh's daughter". All the known facts, as well as the human characteristics which have become so familiar to us, now corroborate the statements of the Old Testament. It was only the supposed date which made the reconciliation difficult—though why the truth was not earlier accepted is hard to understand, for Josephus, even though usually scoffing at Manetho's dating, has definitely given the name of the mysterious Princess as "Thermuthis", and it does not take much imagination to read into this name that of Tahutimes or Thothmes, with the first three of whom she was so closely associated. It will be remembered that Hatshepsut was the daughter of Thothmes I, and was the real heir to the throne, hence her far-reaching influence; that she married Thothmes II who died soon after, and then the mighty Thothmes III (half commoner), and that many years of struggle for supremacy between these two ensued, Hatshepsut, because of her "divine birth", usually managing to retain her royal ascendency. Therefore, so long as Hatshepsut lived, Moses would have had a powerful protector. She was a remarkable woman in every way, as all the records show. Is it possible that, as she bent over the lonely baby in his little "ark" hidden among the reeds by the river bank, she recognized something unusual about him—the future Initiate which *The Secret Doctrine* tells us he was? Was that, perhaps, part of the mystery of his claim upon her? There are many questions as to that first meeting and the later connection which one would like to have answered. When she died, the "Oppression" by the great but uncompromising Thothmes III would have begun, and the Exodus, so difficult of accomplishment, would finally be forced under Amenhotep II,—by no means a weakling, however, as the obstinate holding out against the several plagues would indicate. There is one curious fact which would seem to accord with the dating of the plagues at this period of Egyptian history. Readers of the QUARTERLY (January, 1935), may remember that there is a well-known and very interesting record of Thothmes IV, now recognized as the son of the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Thothmes IV came to the throne unexpectedly; he was not the original heir, but his elder brother had died prematurely. Could we, perhaps, connect this death with the last of the plagues: the death of every "first born" in the land? We do not wish to make Sir Charles Marston responsible for the suggestion, but there can be no doubt that the unlooked-for coming to the throne of the young Prince Thothmes is given a more prominent place in the ancient annals than such an occurrence usually receives.

The facts put forward in this book are in general most interesting. We cannot help feeling, however, that there is an unnecessary amount of repetition of statements and of references—repetition which is confusing rather than elucidating, as an over-supply of material to work on is invariably confusing until well sifted. We also feel that some of the philosophizing is without war-

rant, such, for instance, as the part concerning the evolution of religion, and the statement in regard to Dr. Langdon's "discovery" that monotheism always precedes polytheism. This is not an attempt to throw discredit upon Dr. Langdon's monumental work, *Semitic Mythology;* but to claim that he *discovered* a fact which Theosophy has taught throughout the ages, seems to us to reveal a very limited knowledge of the subject, and all that has been written upon it. There are other portions of the book with which students of Theosophy will not agree, but there is so much in it of valuable information, that anyone even moderately versed in Bible history or study, will find it very helpful.

T.D.

The Nineteenth Century and After, March, 1937; London; price, 3*s*.

We call attention to this issue of the well-known English magazine because it contains an article by Nesta H. Webster, entitled "Marie Antoinette: A Slandered Queen", which many readers of the QUARTERLY will wish to read. Mrs. Webster disposes effectively of the Fersen legend, and deals with the pseudo-historian, Herr Stefan Zweig, as he deserves. We despise slanderers, whether of the living or the dead, and we despise them all the more when their victim is a woman, and when they assume, like Zweig, that stories against her must be true because they are nasty. There is not a shadow of evidence to support such accusations against Marie Antoinette, any more than there is in the case of the murdered Empress of Russia. On the contrary, all the evidence, and all the human probabilities, exonerate them completely. Herr Zweig goes so far as to ignore the existence of Mrs. Sullivan, and Fersen's avowed relations with her, as he knows it would be impossible to reconcile these with his defamation of the Queen. It is not easy to account for this malignant dishonesty (and there are others besides Zweig). "Or is it," as Mrs. Webster asks, "as Ovid recorded two thousand years ago in his *Tristia*, that illicit love is a 'best seller'? Thus it must be invented where it never existed in order to commend books of small intrinsic worth to the jaded palates of the patrons of lending libraries? Or is it that enemies of monarchy, of Christianity, and indeed of European civilization, inflamed with hatred against all that commands reverence, all that is hallowed by tradition, hurl themselves against this woman as symbolical of that superiority they have vowed to destroy?"

The subject concerns members of The Theosophical Society, whose motto is, "There is no Religion higher than Truth", because, if it be true, as Mrs. Webster states, that a film of Marie Antoinette is shortly to be produced, it is almost certain that the "love interest" will be a sensational version of the Fersen myth, as sponsored by Zweig and his *compères*,—in which case it will be the duty and privilege of all of us to protest against the vulgarization of a great tragedy, and, in the name of truth and fair-play and decency, to defend the honour of the martyred Queen.

Calumny of the dead should be punished as a crime. T.

Mediæval Legends of Christ, by A. S. Rappoport, Ph.D.; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1935; price, $3.00.

There are, or course, more reasons than one for reading legends, but readers who are drawn by the title of this book to seek in it spiritual food, have disappointment in store. It contains a fair number of legends, gathered from a moderate variety of sources, but the compiler has retold them in his own language—at the sacrifice of beauty, flavour, individuality. Those who love the Biblical phraseology, and who are familiar, for instance, with the priest named Zacharias who walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, may recognize him with difficulty when presented as "the husband of the infant's aunt". Similarly, tales from French, Old English or whatever sources, when divorced from their original quaint form and setting and clothed in the same infelicitous garb, seem rather like a group of little orphans.

When motifs, originating perhaps in pagan antiquity, recur among different peoples and widely divergent faiths, the compiler, in explanation, offers nothing deeper than the assertion that religious ideas and myths and legends "wander all over the world—they are carried hither and thither like light leaves by the breeze, from the East to the West and from the West to the East". The whole fabric of Mediæval religious life seems not even to be glimpsed by him, nor the long, slow growth of legendary lore through devotion, aspiration and loving contemplation. The measure of his understanding is perhaps indicated in his observation that, "Instead of reasoning and collecting facts, the religious mind in legend can dream pleasantly and be instructed as well as entertained". Whatever the merits of the book, its aftermath is: Why gather flowers at all, if insensible to their beauty and perfume, and impervious to the message they bring? J.C.

La Pensée et le Mouvant, by Henri Bergson; Librairie Félix Alcan, Paris; price, $1.00.

In our opinion, Bergson is one of the very few philosophers of the twentieth century whose work will survive. During the decade before the World War, when his influence was at its height, his power as a moulder of ideas was international in scope. There can be no doubt that this influence was, on the whole, beneficent. Bergson exposed the inadequacies and fallacies of the mechanistic materialism which had become the "orthodox" doctrine of so many schools. He re-affirmed the existence of Spirit, the significance of consciousness as the only fact in Nature, the certainty of which is incontestable. Using the evidence assembled by the biologists themselves, he demonstrated that evolution is a creative process in which man can participate, if he so will. He re-stated the function of the philosopher,—which is, not to invent abstract systems without reference to concrete events, but to meditate upon experience. "It is a fact that an existent thing can only be known through an experience of it. . . . This experience bears the name of 'intuition' when its object is Spirit. . . . This metaphysical experience is akin to that of the great mystics."

With the exception of two introductory chapters, "Thought and Motive Force" is a collection of essays and lectures dating from 1903 to 1923. Many chapters are quite technical, dealing with subjects which can scarcely interest the general reader. In particular, Bergson returns again and again to the problem of time. He discovered, or rather re-discovered, a truth, which should always be self-evident: that mathematical time—the "divided time" of our clocks—is an invention of the mind; that real time or duration is continuous and indivisible, since it is inseparable from the *élan vital*, the stream of consciousness, the universal creative energy. But he assumes too readily that there can be no Being apart from flux and change. He questions the validity of the ancient doctrine that all time, all transition is "a moving image of Eternity", for he seems to believe that this "Eternity" is a mathematical term corresponding to nothing outside the intellect. However, the reality of the Eternal, of immutable and timeless Being, is a fundamental proposition of all great metaphysical traditions. It is legitimate to regard it, not as an arbitrary assumption of the intellect, but as a deduction from actual "metaphysical experience".

It may be argued that "metaphysical experience" is the basis of the unifying generalizations by which classical philosophy has under various forms represented the inner oneness of the Universe. The *Ideas* of Plato, the *One* of Plotinus, the *Substance* of Spinoza, the undivided *Self* of the Vedanta, point to the possibility, nay the certainty, that the unmanifested *essence* of Nature, as well as its manifested ever-changing *form*, can become an object of real knowledge. In Greek mythology, Chronos, the lord of things temporal, is the offspring of Uranus, the everlasting Heaven.

Bergson's tendency to question the truth within these magnificent concepts may be partly explained by the fact that their content becomes barren when the "metaphysical experience" which justifies them is not perpetually renewed. The Hegelian idealism of the nineteenth century was as void of life and meaning as the materialism which it opposed. It might even be said that the materialists were closer to the truth because they at least had some contact with experience, however limited it might be, whereas the idealists were for the most part only playing with ideas as a pure mathematician plays with formulæ. Bergson's principal aim seems to have been to induce both the idealist and the materialist to repeat the experiment of Descartes, to recover the immediate vision of reality. When the mind is crowded with lifeless ideas, it would seem that its only salvation is a return to experience, which implies a tentative rejection of all that it thinks it knows, a vigorous investigation of the sources of all conceptions. It is interesting to note that the philosophers of France have through the centuries been especially active as defenders of this experimental method of approaching truth. One need only mention Descartes, Pascal, Fénelon, Maine de Biran.

Bergson acknowledges a particular indebtedness to a French philosopher of the nineteenth century, Ravaisson. Ravaisson was one of the most remarkable men of his time, although he is unfortunately little known outside France.

Therefore, the essay on his work which is included in the present volume is of exceptional value and interest. One is impressed by the theosophical trend of Ravaisson's thought. Two citations from Bergson's essay should make this clear. In the first, reference is made to Ravaisson's little treatise on "Habit".

> The author actually presents here his philosophy of nature. What is nature? How are we to represent its inner being? What does it hide under the regular succession of causes and effects? Does it hide something, or can it be reduced, in the last analysis, to a wholly superficial complex of movements which work into one another mechanically? In conformity with his principle, Ravaisson seeks the solution of this general problem by means of a very concrete intuition, the intuition of our own mode of being when we contract a habit. For a "motor habit", once contracted, is a mechanism, a series of movements which determine one another: it is that part of us which is inserted in nature and which coincides with nature; it is nature itself. Moreover, our inner experience shows us in every habit an activity which has passed, by insensible degrees, from consciousness to unconsciousness, from the voluntary to the automatic. Is it not under this form, as an obscured consciousness and a dormant will, that we should represent nature? Habit thus provides the living demonstration of this truth that mechanism is not self-sufficient: it is, so to speak, only the fossilized residue of a spiritual activity.

This is an admirable example of reasoning from the known to the unknown, and also of seeking in consciousness, in the inner world, the explanation of the material and the external. Incidentally, it recalls the antithesis between *purusha* and *prakriti*, between the spirit and its vesture, which is the central theme of the Sankhya system of ancient India, and which is so familiar to all readers of the *Bhagavad Gîta*.

In a complementary passage, Bergson illustrates Ravaisson's analogy between the exfoliation of the Universe and the creative act of the artist.

> If life be a creation, we should be able to represent its analogy with the creations which we can observe, that is, with those which we accomplish ourselves. In artistic creation, for example, the material to be used—words and images, forms and colours, rhythms and harmonies—seems to be spontaneously set in order under the impulsion of the idea which it must express, attracted, as it were, in some way by the charm of a superior ideality. Is there not an analogous movement, a state of fascination, which we should attribute to the material elements when they are organized in living beings? In the view of Ravaisson, the force which originates life is of the same nature as that of persuasion. But whence come the materials which have undergone this enchantment? To this question, the highest of all, Ravaisson replies by revealing in the original production of matter a movement which is the inverse of that which occurs when matter is organized. If organization be like an awakening of matter, matter may be only the spirit falling to sleep. It is the last degree, the shadow of an existence which has attenuated itself and, so to speak, emptied itself of its content. If matter be "the base of natural existence, the base from which—by that continuous progress which is the order of nature, passing from degree to degree, from kingdom to kingdom—all returns to the unity of the spirit", inversely, we should represent at the beginning a *distension* of the spirit, a diffusion in space and time, which constitutes materiality. The infinite Thought "has annulled some part of the plenitude of its being, in order to draw forth from this, by a kind of awakening and resurrection, all that exists." . . . Thus the Universe is presented to us as the external aspect of a reality which, seen from within and known as it is in itself, appears to us as a free gift, as a great act of generosity and love.

S.V.

Faiths and Fellowship (World Congress of Faiths, London, 1936), with Foreword by Sir Francis Younghusband; J. M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, London, 1937; price, 15*s*.

This volume contains addresses by representatives of the different faiths of the world,—by men such as Dr. Suzuki, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Professor J. Emile Marcault, Mr. S. I. Hsiung, A. Yusuf Ali, Professor Berdiaeff, S. N. Das Gupta, Sir Abdul Qadir, and others, with a résumé of the discussions, together with a report of the public meetings held in London as part of the proceedings. The Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda is President of the Congress, which will meet again this year, July 23rd to 27th, at Oxford, England.

The addresses, and the discussions which followed, are of great and lasting interest. The Congress met on the understanding that no religion should be regarded as exclusively true, but as complementary one to the other, and as mutually contributory to World Fellowship. We hope to revert to the contents later, but mention the book now, as we have been asked to announce the meeting at Oxford in July. The publisher, Mr. J. M. Watkins, is to be congratulated on the admirable appearance of his volume. H.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY:

I happened to pick up a copy of the QUARTERLY for January, 1937, in the Library, and noticed that you are friends with all religions; but on page 73 you say, "Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which it abhors". That seemed a bit odd to me because the Federal Council of Churches has a socialist programme, which it appears now to be making an integral part of its religion—"to bring the Kingdom of God on earth", as they say. Therefore, if you are hostile to Socialism, you are hostile to Protestant Christianity, because socialism is basic to Protestant Christianity at least in the United States. Personally I do not blame you for being hostile to Socialism, but it does seem a bit contradictory.

I was interested to read about Theosophy in the encyclopædia. The QUARTERLY says that you have no creed or dogma, but the basic principles as announced by H.P.B. certainly are "apriorism"—quite. That means as a necessary consequence—dogma. I have studied some of the beliefs current in India, and what I read of Theosophy is indeed suggestive of India. Perhaps in the QUARTERLY it might have been more clearly expressed by saying that Theosophy has dogma and plenty of it, but its dogma is not insisted upon for membership—much as is the case with the more liberal Christian churches.

Theosophy is primarily interested in finding the "truth". That is what all Christians want, except those who believe that they already have it! But if you will pardon the observation, the method of "apriorism" does not appeal to me to be a valid method. Certainly that of Kant was not. But I will say that the method Theosophy uses is as good as that of the more liberal Christian

churches—but not more so. However, it seems to me problematical in the extreme, if Theosophy ever will find the "truth", any more than will Christianity.

Certainly the lore of the East does not seem as likely to be fruitful of results as does the thought of Hegel, Berkeley, Hume and Hobbes among the moderns, or of the little appreciated Carneades among the ancients. Perhaps that has something to do with the reason why Theosophy has divided into East and West branches. However, I do not condemn esoteric thought *ipso facto;* it would depend upon what that esoteric thought is. No, I could not agree with the college boy, who was disgusted with the QUARTERLY, and I hope you will excuse the liberty of expressing some views anent Theosophy, as merely a superficial observer.

A READER.

Reply

1. That which seems to the writer of the foregoing letter "a bit contradictory", is the result of a two-fold misunderstanding. First, neither the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY nor the Society of which it is the official organ, has any connection with any Church, whether Protestant, Roman, Buddhist or other. Second, the Federal Council of Protestant Churches in America speaks for a section only of Protestant Christianity, that is, for the radical, humanitarian element in Protestantism, which reverses the teaching of Christ by giving love of our neighbour priority over "the first and great commandment",—love of "the Lord thy God", the result of which reversal is to treat man's personal comfort as of primary importance, and to regard his relations with the spiritual world and his own soul, as the result, not the cause, of his environment. Fortunately for America, there are still great numbers of Protestants who do not fall into this crude error, and who do not believe that mankind can be legislated into the kingdom of heaven.

2. Articles in encyclopædias are often written by *doctrinaires* whose knowledge is clouded by their bias as well as by their sense of superiority. Articles on Theosophy in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* are superficial, and in many important respects, misleading. It is more profitable to read a book by a Theosophist, such as *The Ocean of Theosophy*, by William Q. Judge. *Echoes from the Orient*, also by Judge, serves as an admirable introduction to the subject.

3. Theosophy relies as much upon the *a posteriori* as upon the *a priori* method. It is not content to reason from cause to effect, or from universals to particulars, but insists upon the need to "prove all things" by verifying deductions in the light of experience. For example, while it is legitimate to postulate the existence of the soul, and to believe in it, the student of Theosophy considers it his duty to seek within himself the evidence which will turn his belief into knowledge. It is one of the basic principles of Theosophy that *knowledge is obtainable.*

4. It is not stated in the QUARTERLY or elsewhere that Theosophy is without dogma, but that the Society as such has "no creed, dogma, nor personal au-

thority to enforce or impose". The writer of "some views anent Theosophy" is quite correct in saying that "Theosophy has dogma and plenty of it". Seeing that Theosophy is the ancient Wisdom Religion from which all other religions were derived, it necessarily has dogmas, which, after all, simply means that it has doctrines.

5. It is important, however, to distinguish between Theosophy as Divine Wisdom, "eternal in the heavens", and Theosophy as *indicated* in the writings of Madame Blavatsky, Judge and others. It is impossible to do more than indicate Divine Truth in human terms. Knowledge is obtainable, but only by *becoming* the Truth that is. Reason can guide us, as Virgil guided Dante, but only to the threshold of knowledge, after which, vision—direct experience —leads the way to Union. In the same way, Christianity will not "find" the truth; it *is* the Truth, like all the great religions. But this eternal Truth could be expressed in symbols and in parables only, as in the mystery of the divine life and death and resurrection, and Christians (though hardly any realize it) can find the whole Truth in no other way than by union with Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life,—the source, if they use it, of their ultimate immortality.

6. It is not usual to bracket such divergent thinkers as Hegel, Berkeley, Hume and Hobbes, but, in the light of Theosophy, which reconciles so many seeming contradictories, all of them may be studied with advantage as representing visible rays in the spectrum of Truth; Carneades too, for that matter, though we should soon outgrow the stage at which a philosophy of scepticism is helpful; a cathartic is not a diet.

7. We are glad to receive criticisms of Theosophy or of the QUARTERLY, and are much obliged to our correspondent for the opportunity he provides to remove misconceptions under which others of our readers may have laboured.

THE EDITORS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

Let not thy peace depend on the tongues of men; for, whether they judge well of thee or ill, thou art not on that account other than thyself.—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

Not in the clamour of the crowded street,
Not in the shouts and plaudits of the throng,
But in ourselves are triumph and defeat.

—LONGFELLOW.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 401.—*It is said that we have the faults of our virtues. Could this be illustrated? Have we also the virtues of our faults?*

ANSWER.—We may be determined and persevering; we must take care not to become obstinate and opinionated. A man of aggressive courage may become rash, and so jeopardize all for which he is striving. In being charitable to the weaknesses of others, we may be overcome with sentimentality. And so on. Every fault in us has, as its opposite, a corresponding virtue, into which that fault can be changed. But we only have these virtues potentially, until we have done something about it; until we have recognized the need for their attainment, have desired in our hearts their attainment above all things, and have set our faces and have aligned our wills to that end. C.R.A.

ANSWER.—An article by Mr. Griscom, entitled "Vanity", in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for January, 1919, gives an illuminating table of virtues, faults and sins. The article states: "Every spiritual quality has its defective operation or negative aspect, and its polar opposite. A defective operation or negative aspect of a virtue is a fault. Its polar opposite is a sin." Mr. Griscom gave as examples of this: humility (virtue), pride (fault), vanity (sin). Again: love (virtue), indifference (fault), self-love (sin).

The virtues of most of us are only partially developed, are shot through and through with some form of self, and are at best but a pale reflection of those of a Master. We are able to recognize virtues but dimly through the veils of our personalities. Mr. Griscom's definition of a fault, therefore, should prove helpful in enabling us to discover not only what are some of our faults, but of which of the virtues they are the "defective operation or negative aspect". If the ideal of perfection exemplified in our own individual Master is kept constantly before us, and an honest and determined effort made to obey the admonition, "Man know thyself", we shall become more keenly aware of our faults, and at the same time sharpen our perception of the virtues we have perverted. Such a practice would also help us to purify our motives, and assist us in avoiding the danger of thinking that the possession of a virtue in and of itself is necessarily of any real merit. Our ideal should be to regard the elimination of faults and the acquisition of virtues as aids in making us better instruments for the work of Masters.
G.H.M.

ANSWER.—We have powers, which are faults or virtues in accordance with the way in which they are used and our purpose in using them. That which springs from self-love, or is directed to its gratification, is a fault. The same power used for an end other than self, a purpose of righteousness, becomes a virtue. Our task is to transform all our faults into virtues, to reclaim the force we have locked in them, and to use it for the Masters' purposes. Timidity, for instance, is a fault, but prudence, and the power to estimate risks accurately, are virtues. Recklessness is a fault, but the power to "dare the impossible", to run any and all risks, without a thought of the danger, when duty or the service of one's cause demands it, is a virtue essential to manliness. All our powers are divine in origin. Perhaps we might say that a

virtue is the habit of using a given force for the purposes of the soul; a fault is the habit of perverting it to the use of the personality. J.F.B.M.

QUESTION NO. 402.—*Is there any advantage in choosing work which "goes against the grain", if one can find some congenial occupation which would not involve neglect of an obvious duty? Do not people do best the work they enjoy?*

ANSWER.—The wording of the question is obscure. Does one put the finding of a congenial occupation first, and make the performance of obvious duties incidental to it? Why should one choose work simply because it "goes against the grain", when it has nothing to do with any obvious duty?

Once we have set our faces towards chêlaship, there cannot possibly be any more congenial occupation, there is nothing we can enjoy more, than the performance of our duties, or those things which we are able to recognize as duties, at the point at which we find ourselves. At that stage, all our duties may not be obvious. We shall have to ask ourselves, "Is this not a duty?" As we seek, we shall find. As we grow, as our performance improves, new duties will be added unto us, new privileges, new opportunities for service. After a while, we shall not have time to look for congenial occupations. Nothing will be congenial but the doing of that which is our duty. There will be no time, no desire, for anything else.

Finally, we shall find ourselves asking, "Is this a duty? Will the Work be aided or benefited in any way by my interesting myself in it? Of what real, practical value is it to the Movement?" If it fails to measure up in these terms, we discard it, whether it is congenial, or whether it goes against the grain. Nor, if it is the latter, need we fear that we are missing some opportunity for inner growth and development. If we are wholeheartedly trying to expand an ever-widening field of duties, we shall find, in their very multiplicity, enough of those which go against the grain to afford us ample opportunity for hardening and toughening our moral fibre. Nor will it be for long that they will "go against the grain", once we realize the opportunity that they present. C.R.A.

ANSWER.—Let us, first, get our planes straightened out. Man is a creature of dual nature; he has a Higher Self and a lower self, the latter created by himself through his misuse of divine force. This lower self is essentially selfish, and grasps at, and clings to, whatever *it* finds congenial. These two natures within man are in constant conflict, man's immortality depending on the Higher Self regaining its sovereign authority over his *whole* nature. Hence it is safe to surmise that the Higher Self and the lower self are not, necessarily, in accord as to congenial occupations. The probability is, that usually they are at variance on the subject. The lower self seeks to have its own will. The Higher Self is concerned with the will of the Father, and with training the whole nature to be an instrument for carrying out the Father's work. Any occupation furthering that work would be congenial to the Higher Self, no matter how it might go against the grain of the lower self. It would be part of the training of the latter. Of course, it may be a duty, sometimes, to do work that the lower self finds congenial, which allows the exercise, for the sake of others, of some talent one has developed in the past. However, it should be clear that against-the-grain work can create new talents, which, added to previous acquirements, can make us more useful for any task which may be set by the Father. The answer to life is not to be found in what is congenial or enjoyable to the lower self, but in how best to develop new talents which, through the Higher Self, are placed at the disposal of the Father. G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—The application of common-sense is the best solution of such problems. If it is a question of the best means of earning a living, it would clearly be wrong and also foolish not to select one which would best promote the discharge of that duty, regardless of whether or not it "went against the grain". In the case of an aspirant for chêlaship, any harmless act of self-discipline, self-imposed, would be fruitful,—that is, so long as it is not carried out at the expense of others. G.H.M.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NOTICE OF CONVENTION

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 64, Washington Mews, New York, on Saturday, April 24th, 1937, beginning at 10:30 a. m.

2. Branches unable to send delegates to the Convention are requested to send proxies. These may be made out to the Secretary T. S., or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members, with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meetings. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. by April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m.

6. On Sunday, April 25th, at 4 p. m., tea will be served at 64, Washington Mews, to delegates, members, and their friends.

I. E. PERKINS,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society,
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York, N. Y.

February 15th, 1937.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64, Washington Mews, which runs from the east side of Fifth Avenue, midway between Eighth Street and Washington Square, North. No. 64 is the first studio east of Fifth Avenue, on the north side of the Mews. The meetings begin at half-past eight, and close at ten o'clock. There will be meetings on,—

April 3rd and 17th, May 1st.

Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York. Visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.